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THE COLLECTED WORKS OF AMBROSE BIERCE

VOLUME VIII

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NEGLIGIBLE TALES
ON WITH THE DANCE
EPIGRAMS

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NEGLIGIBLE TALES

A BOTTOMLESS GRAVE

MY name is John Brenwalter. My father, a drunkard, had a patent for an invention for making coffee-berries out of clay; but he was an honest man and would not himself engage in the manufacture. He was, therefore, only moderately wealthy, his royalties from his really valuable invention bringing him hardly enough to pay his expenses of litigation with rogues guilty of infringement. So I lacked many advantages enjoyed by the children of unscrupulous and dishonorable parents, and had it not been for a noble and devoted mother, who neglected all my brothers and sisters and personally supervised my education, should have grown up in ignorance and been compelled to teach school. To be the favorite child of a good woman is better than gold.

When I was nineteen years of age my father had the misfortune to die. He had always had perfect health, and his death, which occurred

at the dinner table without a moment's warning, surprised no one more than himself. He had that very morning been notified that a patent had been granted him for a device to burst open safes by hydraulic pressure, without noise. The Commissioner of Patents had pronounced it the most ingenious, effective and generally meritorious invention that had ever been submitted to him, and my father had naturally looked forward to an old age of prosperity and honor. His sudden death was, therefore, a deep disappointment to him; but my mother, whose piety and resignation to the will of Heaven were conspicuous virtues of her character, was apparently less affected. At the close of the meal, when my poor father's body had been removed from the floor, she called us all into an adjoining room and addressed us as follows:

"My children, the uncommon occurrence that you have just witnessed is one of the most disagreeable incidents in a good man's life, and one in which I take little pleasure, I assure you. I beg you to believe that I had no hand in bringing it about. Of course," she added, after a pause, during which her eyes were cast down in deep thought, "of course it is better that he is dead."

She uttered this with so evident a sense of its obviousness as a self-evident truth that none of us had the courage to brave her surprise by asking an explanation. My mother's air of surprise when any of us went wrong in any way was very terrible to us. One day, when in a fit of peevish temper, I had taken the liberty to cut off the baby's ear, her simple words, "John, you surprise me!" appeared to me so sharp a reproof that after a sleepless night I went to her in tears, and throwing myself at her feet, exclaimed: "Mother, forgive me for surprising you." So now we all—including the one-eared baby—felt that it would keep matters smoother to accept without question the statement that it was better, somehow, for our dear father to be dead. My mother continued:

"I must tell you, my children, that in a case of sudden and mysterious death the law requires the Coroner to come and cut the body into pieces and submit them to a number of men who, having inspected them, pronounce the person dead. For this the Coroner gets a large sum of money. I wish to avoid that painful formality in this instance; it is one which never had the approval of—of the remains. John"—here my mother turned her angel face

to me—"you are an educated lad, and very discreet. You have now an opportunity to show your gratitude for all the sacrifices that your education has entailed upon the rest of us. John, go and remove the Coroner."

Inexpressibly delighted by this proof of my mother's confidence, and by the chance to distinguish myself by an act that squared with my natural disposition, I knelt before her, carried her hand to my lips and bathed it with tears of sensibility. Before five o'clock that afternoon I had removed the Coroner.

I was immediately arrested and thrown into jail, where I passed a most uncomfortable night, being unable to sleep because of the profanity of my fellow-prisoners, two clergymen, whose theological training had given them a fertility of impious ideas and a command of blasphemous language altogether unparalleled. But along toward morning the jailer, who, sleeping in an adjoining room, had been equally disturbed, entered the cell and with a fearful oath warned the reverend gentlemen that if he heard any more swearing their sacred calling would not prevent him from turning them into the street. After that they moderated their objectionable conversation, substituting an accordion, and I slept the

peaceful and refreshing sleep of youth and innocence.

The next morning I was taken before the Superior Judge, sitting as a committing magistrate, and put upon my preliminary examination. I pleaded not guilty, adding that the man whom I had murdered was a notorious Democrat. (My good mother was a Republican, and from early childhood I had been carefully instructed by her in the principles of honest government and the necessity of suppressing factional opposition.) The Judge, elected by a Republican ballot-box with a sliding bottom, was visibly impressed by the cogency of my plea and offered me a cigarette.

"May it please your Honor," began the District Attorney, "I do not deem it necessary to submit any evidence in this case. Under the law of the land you sit here as a committing magistrate. It is therefore your duty to commit. Testimony and argument alike would imply a doubt that your Honor means to perform your sworn duty. That is my case."

My counsel, a brother of the deceased Coroner, rose and said: "May it please the Court, my learned friend on the other side has so well and eloquently stated the law governing in this case that it only remains for me to

inquire to what extent it has been already complied with. It is true, your Honor is a committing magistrate, and as such it is your duty to commit—what? That is a matter which the law has wisely and justly left to your own discretion, and wisely you have discharged already every obligation that the law imposes. Since I have known your Honor you have done nothing but commit. You have committed embracery, theft, arson, perjury, adultery, murder—every crime in the calendar and every excess known to the sensual and depraved, including my learned friend, the District Attorney. You have done your whole duty as a committing magistrate, and as there is no evidence against this worthy young man, my client, I move that he be discharged."

An impressive silence ensued. The Judge arose, put on the black cap and in a voice trembling with emotion sentenced me to life and liberty. Then turning to my counsel he said, coldly but significantly:

"I will see you later."

The next morning the lawyer who had so conscientiously defended me against a charge of murdering his own brother—with whom he had a quarrel about some land—had disappeared and his fate is to this day unknown.

In the meantime my poor father's body had been secretly buried at midnight in the back yard of his late residence, with his late boots on and the contents of his late stomach unanalyzed. "He was opposed to display," said my dear mother, as she finished tamping down the earth above him and assisted the children to litter the place with straw; "his instincts were all domestic and he loved a quiet life."

My mother's application for letters of administration stated that she had good reason to believe that the deceased was dead, for he had not come home to his meals for several days; but the Judge of the Crowbait Court—as she ever afterward contemptuously called it—decided that the proof of death was insufficient, and put the estate into the hands of the Public Administrator, who was his son-in-law. It was found that the liabilities were exactly balanced by the assets; there was left only the patent for the device for bursting open safes without noise, by hydraulic pressure and this had passed into the ownership of the Probate Judge and the Public Administraitor—as my dear mother preferred to spell it. Thus, within a few brief months a worthy and respectable family was reduced from pros-

perity to crime; necessity compelled us to go to work.

In the selection of occupations we were governed by a variety of considerations, such as personal fitness, inclination, and so forth. My mother opened a select private school for instruction in the art of changing the spots upon leopard-skin rugs; my eldest brother, George Henry, who had a turn for music, became a bugler in a neighboring asylum for deaf mutes; my sister, Mary Maria, took orders for Professor Pumpernickel's Essence of Latchkeys for flavoring mineral springs, and I set up as an adjuster and gilder of crossbeams for gibbets. The other children, too young for labor, continued to steal small articles exposed in front of shops, as they had been taught.

In our intervals of leisure we decoyed travelers into our house and buried the bodies in a cellar.

In one part of this cellar we kept wines, liquors and provisions. From the rapidity of their disappearance we acquired the superstitious belief that the spirits of the persons buried there came at dead of night and held a festival. It was at least certain that frequently of a morning we would discover fragments of pickled meats, canned goods and

such débris, littering the place, although it had been securely locked and barred against human intrusion. It was proposed to remove the provisions and store them elsewhere, but our dear mother, always generous and hospitable, said it was better to endure the loss than risk exposure: if the ghosts were denied this trifling gratification they might set on foot an investigation, which would overthrow our scheme of the division of labor, by diverting the energies of the whole family into the single industry pursued by me—we might all decorate the cross-beams of gibbets. We accepted her decision with filial submission, due to our reverence for her wordly wisdom and the purity of her character.

One night while we were all in the cellar—none dared to enter it alone—engaged in bestowing upon the Mayor of an adjoining town the solemn offices of Christian burial, my mother and the younger children, holding a candle each, while George Henry and I labored with a spade and pick, my sister Mary Maria uttered a shriek and covered her eyes with her hands. We were all dreadfully startled and the Mayor's obsequies were instantly suspended, while with pale faces and in trembling tones we begged her to say what

had alarmed her. The younger children were so agitated that they held their candles unsteadily, and the waving shadows of our figures danced with uncouth and grotesque movements on the walls and flung themselves into the most uncanny attitudes. The face of the dead man, now gleaming ghastly in the light, and now extinguished by some floating shadow, appeared at each emergence to have taken on a new and more forbidding expression, a maligner menace. Frightened even more than ourselves by the girl's scream, rats raced in multitudes about the place, squeaking shrilly, or starred the black opacity of some distant corner with steadfast eyes, mere points of green light, matching the faint phosphorescence of decay that filled the half-dug grave and seemed the visible manifestation of that faint odor of mortality which tainted the unwholesome air. The children now sobbed and clung about the limbs of their elders, dropping their candles, and we were near being left in total darkness, except for that sinister light, which slowly welled upward from the disturbed earth and overflowed the edges of the grave like a fountain.

Meanwhile my sister, crouching in the earth that had been thrown out of the excavation,

had removed her hands from her face and was staring with expanded eyes into an obscure space between two wine casks.

"There it is!—there it is!" she shrieked, pointing; "God in heaven! can't you see it?"

And there indeed it was!—a human figure, dimly discernible in the gloom—a figure that wavered from side to side as if about to fall, clutching at the wine-casks for support, had stepped unsteadily forward and for one moment stood revealed in the light of our remaining candles; then it surged heavily and fell prone upon the earth. In that moment we had all recognized the figure, the face and bearing of our father—dead these ten months and buried by our own hands!—our father indubitably risen and ghastly drunk!

On the incidents of our precipitate flight from that horrible place—on the extinction of all human sentiment in that tumultuous, mad scramble up the damp and mouldy stairs—slipping, falling, pulling one another down and clambering over one another's back—the lights extinguished, babes trampled beneath the feet of their strong brothers and hurled backward to death by a mother's arm!—on all this I do not dare to dwell. My mother, my eldest brother and sister and I escaped; the

others remained below, to perish of their wounds, or of their terror—some, perhaps, by flame. For within an hour we four, hastily gathering together what money and jewels we had and what clothing we could carry, fired the dwelling and fled by its light into the hills. We did not even pause to collect the insurance, and my dear mother said on her death-bed, years afterward in a distant land, that this was the only sin of omission that lay upon her conscience. Her confessor, a holy man, assured her that under the circumstances Heaven would pardon the neglect.

About ten years after our removal from the scenes of my childhood I, then a prosperous forger, returned in disguise to the spot with a view to obtaining, if possible, some treasure belonging to us, which had been buried in the cellar. I may say that I was unsuccessful: the discovery of many human bones in the ruins had set the authorities digging for more. They had found the treasure and had kept it for their honesty. The house had not been rebuilt; the whole suburb was, in fact, a desolation. So many unearthly sights and sounds had been reported thereabout that nobody would live there. As there was none to question nor molest, I resolved to gratify my filial piety by

gazing once more upon the face of my beloved father, if indeed our eyes had deceived us and he was still in his grave. I remembered, too, that he had always worn an enormous diamond ring, and never having seen it nor heard of it since his death, I had reason to think he might have been buried in it. Procuring a spade, I soon located the grave in what had been the backyard and began digging. When I had got down about four feet the whole bottom fell out of the grave and I was precipitated into a large drain, falling through a long hole in its crumbling arch. There was no body, nor any vestige of one.

Unable to get out of the excavation, I crept through the drain, and having with some difficulty removed a mass of charred rubbish and blackened masonry that choked it, emerged into what had been that fateful cellar.

All was clear. My father, whatever had caused him to be "taken bad" at his meal (and I think my sainted mother could have thrown some light upon that matter) had indubitably been buried alive. The grave having been accidentally dug above the forgotten drain, and down almost to the crown of its arch, and no coffin having been used, his struggles on reviving had broken the rotten ma-

sonry and he had fallen through, escaping finally into the cellar. Feeling that he was not welcome in his own house, yet having no other, he had lived in subterranean seclusion, a witness to our thrift and a pensioner on our providence. It was he who had eaten our food; it was he who had drunk our wine—he was no better than a thief! In a moment of intoxication, and feeling, no doubt, that need of companionship which is the one sympathetic link between a drunken man and his race, he had left his place of concealment at a strangely inopportune time, entailing the most deplorable consequences upon those nearest and dearest to him—a blunder that had almost the dignity of crime.

JUPITER DOKE, BRIGADIER-GENERAL

From the Secretary of War to the Hon. Jupiter Doke, Hardpan Crossroads, Posey County, Illinois.

WASHINGTON, November 3, 1861.

HAVING faith in your patriotism and ability, the President has been pleased to appoint you a brigadier-general of volunteers. Do you accept?

From the Hon. Jupiter Doke to the Secretary of War.

HARDPAN, ILLINOIS, November 9, 1861.

It is the proudest moment of my life. The office is one which should be neither sought nor declined. In times that try men's souls the patriot knows no North, no South, no East, no West. His motto should be: "My country, my whole country and nothing but my

country." I accept the great trust confided in me by a free and intelligent people, and with a firm reliance on the principles of constitutional liberty, and invoking the guidance of an all-wise Providence, Ruler of Nations, shall labor so to discharge it as to leave no blot upon my political escutcheon. Say to his Excellency, the successor of the immortal Washington in the Seat of Power, that the patronage of my office will be bestowed with an eye single to securing the greatest good to the greatest number, the stability of republican institutions and the triumph of the party in all elections; and to this I pledge my life, my fortune and my sacred honor. I shall at once prepare an appropriate response to the speech of the chairman of the committee deputed to inform me of my appointment, and I trust the sentiments therein expressed will strike a sympathetic chord in the public heart, as well as command the Executive approval.

From the Secretary of War to Major-General Blount Wardorg, Commanding the Military Department of Eastern Kentucky.

WASHINGTON, November 14, 1861.

I have assigned to your department Brigad-

ier-General Jupiter Doke, who will soon proceed to Distilleryville, on the Little Buttermilk River, and take command of the Illinois Brigade at that point, reporting to you by letter for orders. Is the route from Covington by way of Bluegrass, Opossum Corners and Horsecave still infested with bushwackers, as reported in your last dispatch? I have a plan for cleaning them out.

From Major-General Blount Wardorg to the Secretary of War.

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY,
November 20, 1861.

The name and services of Brigadier-General Doke are unfamiliar to me, but I shall be pleased to have the advantage of his skill. The route from Covington to Distilleryville *via* Opossum Corners and Horsecave I have been compelled to abandon to the enemy, whose guerilla warfare made it possible to keep it open without detaching too many troops from the front. The brigade at Distilleryville is supplied by steamboats up the Little Buttermilk.

From the Secretary of War to Brigadier-General Jupiter Doke, Hardpan, Illinois.

WASHINGTON, November 26, 1861.

I deeply regret that your commission had been forwarded by mail before the receipt of your letter of acceptance; so we must dispense with the formality of official notification to you by a committee. The President is highly gratified by the noble and patriotic sentiments of your letter, and directs that you proceed at once to your command at Distilleryville, Kentucky, and there report by letter to Major-General Wardorg at Louisville, for orders. It is important that the strictest secrecy be observed regarding your movements until you have passed Covington, as it is desired to hold the enemy in front of Distilleryville until you are within three days of him. Then if your approach is known it will operate as a demonstration against his right and cause him to strengthen it with his left now at Memphis, Tennessee, which it is desirable to capture first. Go by way of Bluegrass, Opossum Corners and Horsecave. All officers are expected to be in full uniform when *en route* to the front.

From Brigadier-General Jupiter Doke to the Secretary of War.

COVINGTON, KENTUCKY, December 7, 1861.

I arrived yesterday at this point, and have given my proxy to Joel Briller, Esq., my wife's cousin, and a staunch Republican, who will worthily represent Posey County in field and forum. He points with pride to a stainless record in the halls of legislation, which have often echoed to his soul-stirring eloquence on questions which lie at the very foundation of popular government. He has been called the Patrick Henry of Hardpan, where he has done yeoman's service in the cause of civil and religious liberty. Mr. Briller left for Distilleryville last evening, and the standard bearer of the Democratic host confronting that stronghold of freedom will find him a lion in his path. I have been asked to remain here and deliver some addresses to the people in a local contest involving issues of paramount importance. That duty being performed, I shall in person enter the arena of armed debate and move in the direction of the heaviest firing, burning my ships behind me. I forward by this mail to his Excellency the President a request for the appointment of my son,

Jabez Leonidas Doke, as postmaster at Hardpan. I would take it, sir, as a great favor if you would give the application a strong oral indorsement, as the appointment is in the line of reform. Be kind enough to inform me what are the emoluments of the office I hold in the military arm, and if they are by salary or fees. Are there any perquisites? My mileage account will be transmitted monthly.

From Brigadier-General Jupiter Doke to Major General Blount Wardorg.

DISTILLERYVILLE, KENTUCKY,
January 12, 1862.

I arrived on the tented field yesterday by steamboat, the recent storms having inundated the landscape, covering, I understand, the greater part of a congressional district. I am pained to find that Joel Briller, Esq., a prominent citizen of Posey County, Illinois, and a far-seeing statesman who held my proxy, and who a month ago should have been thundering at the gates of Disunion, has not been heard from, and has doubtless been sacrificed upon the altar of his country. In him the American people lose a bulwark of freedom.

I would respectfully move that you designate a committee to draw up resolutions of respect to his memory, and that the office holders and men under your command wear the usual badge of mourning for thirty days. I shall at once place myself at the head of affairs here, and am now ready to entertain any suggestions which you may make, looking to the better enforcement of the laws in this commonwealth. The militant Democrats on the other side of the river appear to be contemplating extreme measures. They have two large cannons facing this way, and yesterday morning, I am told, some of them came down to the water's edge and remained in session for some time, making infamous allegations.

From the Diary of Brigadier-General Jupiter Doke, at Distilleryville, Kentucky.

January 12, 1862.—On my arrival yesterday at the Henry Clay Hotel (named in honor of the late far-seeing statesman) I was waited on by a delegation consisting of the three colonels intrusted with the command of the regiments of my brigade. It was an occasion that will be memorable in the political annals of

America. Forwarded copies of the speeches to the Posey *Maverick,* to be spread upon the record of the ages. The gentlemen composing the delegation unanimously reaffirmed their devotion to the principles of national unity and the Republican party. Was gratified to recognize in them men of political prominence and untarnished escutcheons. At the subsequent banquet, sentiments of lofty patriotism were expressed. Wrote to Mr. Wardorg at Louisville for instructions.

January 13, 1862.—Leased a prominent residence (the former incumbent being absent in arms against his country) for the term of one year, and wrote at once for Mrs. Brigadier-General Doke and the vital issues—excepting Jabez Leonidas. In the camp of treason opposite here there are supposed to be three thousand misguided men laying the ax at the root of the tree of liberty. They have a clear majority, many of our men having returned without leave to their constituents. We could probably not poll more than two thousand votes. Have advised my heads of regiments to make a canvass of those remaining, all bolters to be read out of the phalanx.

January 14, 1862.—Wrote to the President, asking for the contract to supply this com-

mand with firearms and regalia through my brother-in-law, prominently identified with the manufacturing interests of the country. Club of cannon soldiers arrived at Jayhawk, three miles back from here, on their way to join us in battle array. Marched my whole brigade to Jayhawk to escort them into town, but their chairman, mistaking us for the opposing party, opened fire on the head of the procession and by the extraordinary noise of the cannon balls (I had no conception of it!) so frightened my horse that I was unseated without a contest. The meeting adjourned in disorder and returning to camp I found that a deputation of the enemy had crossed the river in our absence and made a division of the loaves and fishes. Wrote to the President, applying for the Gubernatorial Chair of the Territory of Idaho.

From Editorial Article in the Posey, Illinois, "Maverick," January 20, 1862.

Brigadier-General Doke's thrilling account, in another column, of the Battle of Distilleryville will make the heart of every loyal Illinoisian leap with exultation. The brilliant

exploit marks an era in military history, and as General Doke says, "lays broad and deep the foundations of American prowess in arms." As none of the troops engaged, except the gallant author-chieftain (a host in himself) hails from Posey County, he justly considered that a list of the fallen would only occupy our valuable space to the exclusion of more important matter, but his account of the strategic ruse by which he apparently abandoned his camp and so inveigled a perfidious enemy into it for the purpose of murdering the sick, the unfortunate *countertempus* at Jayhawk, the subsequent dash upon a trapped enemy flushed with a supposed success, driving their terrified legions across an impassable river which precluded pursuit—all these "moving accidents by flood and field" are related with a pen of fire and have all the terrible interest of romance.

Verily, truth is stranger than fiction and the pen is mightier than the sword. When by the graphic power of the art preservative of all arts we are brought face to face with such glorious events as these, the *Maverick's* enterprise in securing for its thousands of readers the services of so distinguished a contributor as the Great Captain who made the history as

well as wrote it seems a matter of almost secondary importance. For President in 1864 (subject to the decision of the Republican National Convention) Brigadier-General Jupiter Doke, of Illinois!

From Major-General Blount Wardorg to Brigadier-General Jupiter Doke.

LOUISVILLE, January 22, 1862.

Your letter apprising me of your arrival at Distilleryville was delayed in transmission, having only just been received (open) through the courtesy of the Confederate department commander under a flag of truce. He begs me to assure you that he would consider it an act of cruelty to trouble you, and I think it would be. Maintain, however, a threatening attitude, but at the least pressure retire. Your position is simply an outpost which it is not intended to hold.

From Major-General Blount Wardorg to the Secretary of War.

LOUISVILLE, January 23, 1862.

I have certain information that the enemy has concentrated twenty thousand troops of all

arms on the Little Buttermilk. According to your assignment, General Doke is in command of the small brigade of raw troops opposing them. It is no part of my plan to contest the enemy's advance at that point, but I cannot hold myself responsible for any reverses to the brigade mentioned, under its present commander. I think him a fool.

From the Secretary of War to Major-General Blount Wardorg.

WASHINGTON, February 1, 1862.

The President has great faith in General Doke. If your estimate of him is correct, however, he would seem to be singularly well placed where he now is, as your plans appear to contemplate a considerable sacrifice for whatever advantages you expect to gain.

From Brigadier-General Jupiter Doke to Major-General Blount Wardorg.

DISTILLERYVILLE, February 1, 1862.

To-morrow I shall remove my headquarters to Jayhawk in order to point the way when-

ever my brigade retires from Distilleryville, as foreshadowed by your letter of the 22d ult. I have appointed a Committee on Retreat, the minutes of whose first meeting I transmit to you. You will perceive that the committee having been duly organized by the election of a chairman and secretary, a resolution (prepared by myself) was adopted, to the effect that in case treason again raises her hideous head on this side of the river every man of the brigade is to mount a mule, the procession to move promptly in the direction of Louisville and the loyal North. In preparation for such an emergency I have for some time been collecting mules from the resident Democracy, and have on hand 2300 in a field at Jayhawk. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty!

From Major-General Gibeon J. Buxter, C. S. A., to the Confederate Secretary of War.

BUNG STATION, KENTUCKY,
February 4, 1862.

On the night of the 2d inst., our entire force, consisting of 25,000 men and thirty-two field pieces, under command of Major-General Simmons B. Flood, crossed by a ford to the

north side of Little Buttermilk River at a point three miles above Distilleryville and moved obliquely down and away from the stream, to strike the Covington turnpike at Jayhawk; the object being, as you know, to capture Covington, destroy Cincinnati and occupy the Ohio Valley. For some months there had been in our front only a small brigade of undisciplined troops, apparently without a commander, who were useful to us, for by not disturbing them we could create an impression of our weakness. But the movement on Jayhawk having isolated them, I was about to detach an Alabama regiment to bring them in, my division being the leading one, when an earth-shaking rumble was felt and heard, and suddenly the head-of-column was struck by one of the terrible tornadoes for which this region is famous, and utterly annihilated. The tornado, I believe, passed along the entire length of the road back to the ford, dispersing or destroying our entire army; but of this I cannot be sure, for I was lifted from the earth insensible and blown back to the south side of the river. Continuous firing all night on the north side and the reports of such of our men as have recrossed at the ford convince me that the Yankee brigade has exterm-

inated the disabled survivors. Our loss has been uncommonly heavy. Of my own division of 15,000 infantry, the casualties—killed, wounded, captured, and missing—are 14,994. Of General Dolliver Billow's division, 11,200 strong, I can find but two officers and a nigger cook. Of the artillery, 800 men, none has reported on this side of the river. General Flood is dead. I have assumed command of the expeditionary force, but owing to the heavy losses have deemed it advisable to contract my line of supplies as rapidly as possible. I shall push southward to-morrow morning early. The purposes of the campaign have been as yet but partly accomplished.

From Major-General Dolliver Billows, C. S. A., to the Confederate Secretary of War.

BUHAC, KENTUCKY, February 5, 1862.

. . . But during the 2d they had, unknown to us, been reinforced by fifty thousand cavalry, and being apprised of our movement by a spy, this vast body was drawn up in the darkness at Jayhawk, and as the head of our column reached that point at about 11 P. M., fell upon it with astonishing fury, destroying the

division of General Buxter in an instant. General Baumschank's brigade of artillery, which was in the rear, may have escaped—I did not wait to see, but withdrew my division to the river at a point several miles above the ford, and at daylight ferried it across on two fence rails lashed together with a suspender. Its losses, from an effective strength of 11,200, are 11,199. General Buxter is dead. I am changing my base to Mobile, Alabama.

From Brigadier-General Schneddeker Baumschank, C. S. A., to the Confederate Secretary of War.

IODINE, KENTUCKY, February 6, 1862.

. . . Yoost den somdings occur, I know nod vot it vos—somdings mackneefcent, but it vas nod vor—und I finds meinselluf, afder leedle viles, in dis blace, midout a hors und mit no men und goons. Sheneral Peelows is deadt. You will blease be so goot as to resign me—I vights no more in a dam gontry vere I gets vipped und knows nod how it vos done.

Resolutions of Congress, February 15, 1862.

Resolved, That the thanks of Congress are due, and hereby tendered, to Brigadier-Gen-

eral Jupiter Doke and the gallant men under his command for their unparalleled feat of attacking—themselves only 2000 strong—an army of 25,000 men and utterly overthrowing it, killing 5327, making prisoners of 19,003, of whom more than half were wounded, taking 32 guns, 20,000 stand of small arms and, in short, the enemy's entire equipment.

Resolved, That for this unexampled victory the President be requested to designate a day of thanksgiving and public celebration of religious rites in the various churches.

Resolved, That he be requested, in further commemoration of the great event, and in reward of the gallant spirits whose deeds have added such imperishable lustre to the American arms, to appoint, with the advice and consent of the Senate, the following officer:

One major-general.

Statement of Mr. Hannibal Alcazar Peyton, of Jayhawk, Kentucky.

Dat wus a almighty dark night, sho', and dese yere ole eyes aint wuf shuks, but I's got a year like a sque'l, an' w'en I cotch de mummer o' v'ices I knowed dat gang b'long on de

far side o' de ribber. So I jes' runs in de house an' wakes Marse Doke an' tells him: "Skin outer dis fo' yo' life!" An' de Lo'd bress my soul! ef dat man didn' go right fru de winder in his shir' tail an' break for to cross de mule patch! An' dem twenty-free hunerd mules dey jes' t'nk it is de debble hese'f wid de brandin' iron, an' dey bu'st outen dat patch like a yarthquake, an' pile inter de upper ford road, an' flash down it five deep, an' it full o' Confed'rates from en' to en'! . . .

THE WIDOWER TURMORE

THE circumstances under which Joram Turmore became a widower have never been popularly understood. I know them, naturally, for I am Joram Turmore; and my wife, the late Elizabeth Mary Turmore, is by no means ignorant of them; but although she doubtless relates them, yet they remain a secret, for not a soul has ever believed her.

When I married Elizabeth Mary Johnin she was very wealthy, otherwise I could hardly have afforded to marry, for I had not a cent, and Heaven had not put into my heart any intention to earn one. I held the Professorship of Cats in the University of Graymaulkin, and scholastic pursuits had unfitted me for the heat and burden of business or labor. Moreover, I could not forget that I was a Turmore—a member of a family whose motto from the time of William of Normandy has been *Laborare est errare*. The only known infraction of the sacred family tradition occurred when Sir Aldebaran Turmore de

Peters-Turmore, an illustrious master burglar of the seventeenth century, personally assisted at a difficult operation undertaken by some of his workmen. That blot upon our escutcheon cannot be contemplated without the most poignant mortification.

My incumbency of the Chair of Cats in the Graymaulkin University had not, of course, been marked by any instance of mean industry. There had never, at any one time, been more than two students of the Noble Science, and by merely repeating the manuscript lectures of my predecessor, which I had found among his effects (he died at sea on his way to Malta) I could sufficiently sate their famine for knowledge without really earning even the distinction which served in place of salary.

Naturally, under the straitened circumstances, I regarded Elizabeth Mary as a kind of special Providence. She unwisely refused to share her fortune with me, but for that I cared nothing; for, although by the laws of that country (as is well known) a wife has control of her separate property during her life, it passes to the husband at her death; nor can she dispose of it otherwise by will. The mortality among wives is considerable, but not excessive.

Having married Elizabeth Mary and, as it were, ennobled her by making her a Turmore, I felt that the manner of her death ought, in some sense, to match her social distinction. If I should remove her by any of the ordinary marital methods I should incur a just reproach, as one destitute of a proper family pride. Yet I could not hit upon a suitable plan.

In this emergency I decided to consult the Turmore archives, a priceless collection of documents, comprising the records of the family from the time of its founder in the seventh century of our era. I knew that among these sacred muniments I should find detailed accounts of all the principal murders committed by my sainted ancestors for forty generations. From that mass of papers I could hardly fail to derive the most valuable suggestions.

The collection contained also most interesting relics. There were patents of nobility granted to my forefathers for daring and ingenious removals of pretenders to thrones, or occupants of them; stars, crosses and other decorations attesting services of the most secret and unmentionable character; miscellaneous gifts from the world's greatest con-

spirators, representing an intrinsic money value beyond computation. There were robes, jewels, swords of honor, and every kind of "testimonials of esteem"; a king's skull fashioned into a wine cup; the title deeds to vast estates, long alienated by confiscation, sale, or abandonment; an illuminated breviary that had belonged to Sir Aldebaran Turmore de Peters-Turmore of accursed memory; embalmed ears of several of the family's most renowned enemies; the small intestine of a certain unworthy Italian statesman inimical to Turmores, which, twisted into a jumping rope, had served the youth of six kindred generations—mementoes and souvenirs precious beyond the appraisals of imagination, but by the sacred mandates of tradition and sentiment forever inalienable by sale or gift.

As the head of the family, I was custodian of all these priceless heirlooms, and for their safe keeping had constructed in the basement of my dwelling a strong-room of massive masonry, whose solid stone walls and single iron door could defy alike the earthquake's shock, the tireless assaults of Time, and Cupidity's unholy hand.

To this thesaurus of the soul, redolent of sentiment and tenderness, and rich in sugges-

tions of crime, I now repaired for hints upon assassination. To my unspeakable astonishment and grief I found it empty! Every shelf, every chest, every coffer had been rifled. Of that unique and incomparable collection not a vestige remained! Yet I proved that until I had myself unlocked the massive metal door, not a bolt nor bar had been disturbed; the seals upon the lock had been intact.

I passed the night in alternate lamentation and research, equally fruitless; the mystery was impenetrable to conjecture, the pain invincible to balm. But never once throughout that dreadful night did my firm spirit relinquish its high design against Elizabeth Mary, and daybreak found me more resolute than before to harvest the fruits of my marriage. My great loss seemed but to bring me into nearer spiritual relations with my dead ancestors, and to lay upon me a new and more inevitable obedience to the suasion that spoke in every globule of my blood.

My plan of action was soon formed, and procuring a stout cord I entered my wife's bedroom, finding her, as I expected, in a sound sleep. Before she was awake, I had her bound fast, hand and foot. She was greatly surprised and pained, but heedless of

her remonstrances, delivered in a high key, I carried her into the now rifled strong-room, which I had never suffered her to enter, and of whose treasures I had not apprised her. Seating her, still bound, in an angle of the wall, I passed the next two days and nights in conveying bricks and mortar to the spot, and on the morning of the third day had her securely walled in, from floor to ceiling. All this time I gave no further heed to her pleas for mercy than (on her assurance of non-resistance, which I am bound to say she honorably observed) to grant her the freedom of her limbs. The space allowed her was about four feet by six. As I inserted the last bricks of the top course, in contact with the ceiling of the strong-room, she bade me farewell with what I deemed the composure of despair, and I rested from my work, feeling that I had faithfully observed the traditions of an ancient and illustrious family. My only bitter reflection, so far as my own conduct was concerned, came of the consciousness that in the performance of my design I had labored; but this no living soul would ever know.

After a night's rest I went to the Judge of the Court of Successions and Inheritances and made a true and sworn relation of all that I

had done—except that I ascribed to a servant the manual labor of building the wall. His honor appointed a court commissioner, who made a careful examination of the work, and upon his report Elizabezth Mary Turmore was, at the end of a week, formally pronounced dead. By due process of law I was put into possession of her estate, and although this was not by hundreds of thousands of dollars as valuable as my lost treasures, it raised me from poverty to affluence and brought me the respect of the great and good.

Some six months after these events strange rumors reached me that the ghost of my deceased wife had been seen in several places about the country, but always at a considerable distance from Graymaulkin. These rumors, which I was unable to trace to any authentic source, differed widely in many particulars, but were alike in ascribing to the apparition a certain high degree of apparent worldly prosperity combined with an audacity most uncommon in ghosts. Not only was the spirit attired in most costly raiment, but it walked at noonday, and even drove! I was inexpressibly annoyed by these reports, and thinking there might be something more than superstition in the popular belief that only the spirits

of the unburied dead still walk the earth, I took some workmen equipped with picks and crowbars into the now long unentered strong-room, and ordered them to demolish the brick wall that I had built about the partner of my joys. I was resolved to give the body of Elizabeth Mary such burial as I thought her immortal part might be willing to accept as an equivalent to the privilege of ranging at will among the haunts of the living.

In a few minutes we had broken down the wall and, thrusting a lamp through the breach, I looked in. Nothing! Not a bone, not a lock of hair, not a shred of clothing—the narrow space which, upon my affidavit, had been legally declared to hold all that was mortal of the late Mrs. Turmore was absolutely empty! This amazing disclosure, coming upon a mind already overwrought with too much of mystery and excitement, was more than I could bear. I shrieked aloud and fell in a fit. For months afterward I lay between life and death, fevered and delirious; nor did I recover until my physician had had the providence to take a case of valuable jewels from my safe and leave the country.

The next summer I had occasion to visit my wine cellar, in one corner of which I had

built the now long disused strong-room. In moving a cask of Madeira I struck it with considerable force against the partition wall, and was surprised to observe that it displaced two large square stones forming a part of the wall.

Applying my hands to these, I easily pushed them out entirely, and looking through saw that they had fallen into the niche in which I had immured my lamented wife; facing the opening which their fall left, and at a distance of four feet, was the brickwork which my own hands had made for that unfortunate gentlewoman's restraint. At this significant revelation I began a search of the wine cellar. Behind a row of casks I found four historically interesting but intrinsically valueless objects:

First, the mildewed remains of a ducal robe of state (Florentine) of the eleventh century; second, an illuminated vellum breviary with the name of Sir Aldebaran Turmore de Peters-Turmore inscribed in colors on the title page; third, a human skull fashioned into a drinking cup and deeply stained with wine; fourth, the iron cross of a Knight Commander of the Imperial Austrian Order of Assassins by Poison.

That was all—not an object having commercial value, no papers—nothing. But this was enough to clear up the mystery of the strong-room. My wife had early divined the existence and purpose of that apartment, and with the skill amounting to genius had effected an entrance by loosening the two stones in the wall.

Through that opening she had at several times abstracted the entire collection, which doubtless she had succeeded in converting into coin of the realm. When with an unconscious justice which deprives me of all satisfaction in the memory I decided to build her into the wall, by some malign fatality I selected that part of it in which were these movable stones, and doubtless before I had fairly finished my bricklaying she had removed them and, slipping through into the wine cellar, replaced them as they were originally laid. From the cellar she had easily escaped unobserved, to enjoy her infamous gains in distant parts. I have endeavored to procure a warrant, but the Lord High Baron of the Court of Indictment and Conviction reminds me that she is legally dead, and says my only course is to go before the Master in Cadavery and move for a writ of disinterment

and constructive revival. So it looks as if I must suffer without redress this great wrong at the hands of a woman devoid alike of principle and shame.

THE CITY OF THE GONE AWAY

I WAS born of poor because honest parents, and until I was twenty-three years years old never knew the possibilities of happiness latent in another person's coin. At that time Providence threw me into a deep sleep and revealed to me in a dream the folly of labor. "Behold," said a vision of a holy hermit, "the poverty and squalor of your lot and listen to the teachings of nature. You rise in the morning from your pallet of straw and go forth to your daily labor in the fields. The flowers nod their heads in friendly salutation as you pass. The lark greets you with a burst of song. The early sun sheds his temperate beams upon you, and from the dewy grass you inhale an atmosphere cool and grateful to your lungs. All nature seems to salute you with the joy of a generous servant welcoming a faithful master. You are in harmony with her gentlest mood and your soul sings within you. You begin

your daily task at the plow, hopeful that the noonday will fulfill the promise of the morn, maturing the charms of the landscape and confirming its benediction upon your spirit. You follow the plow until fatigue invokes repose, and seating yourself upon the earth at the end of your furrow you expect to enjoy in fulness the delights of which you did but taste.

"Alas! the sun has climbed into a brazen sky and his beams are become a torrent. The flowers have closed their petals, confining their perfume and denying their colors to the eye. Coolness no longer exhales from the grass: the dew has vanished and the dry surface of the fields repeats the fierce heat of the sky. No longer the birds of heaven salute you with melody, but the jay harshly upbraids you from the edge of the copse. Unhappy man! all the gentle and healing ministrations of nature are denied you in punishment of your sin. You have broken the First Commandment of the Natural Decalogue: you have labored!"

Awakening from my dream, I collected my few belongings, bade adieu to my erring parents and departed out of that land, pausing at the grave of my grandfather, who had been a

priest, to take an oath that never again, Heaven helping me, would I earn an honest penny.

How long I traveled I know not, but I came at last to a great city by the sea, where I set up as a physician. The name of that place I do not now remember, for such were my activity and renown in my new profession that the Aldermen, moved by pressure of public opinion, altered it, and thenceforth the place was known as the City of the Gone Away. It is needless to say that I had no knowledge of medicine, but by securing the service of an eminent forger I obtained a diploma purporting to have been granted by the Royal Quackery of Charlatanic Empiricism at Hoodos, which, framed in immortelles and suspended by a bit of *crêpe* to a willow in front of my office, attracted the ailing in great numbers. In connection with my dispensary I conducted one of the largest undertaking establishments ever known, and as soon as my means permitted, purchased a wide tract of land and made it into a cemetery. I owned also some very profitable marble works on one side of the gateway to the cemetery, and on the other an extensive flower garden. My Mourner's Emporium was patronized by the beauty,

fashion and sorrow of the city. In short, I was in a very prosperous way of business, and within a year was able to send for my parents and establish my old father very comfortably as a receiver of stolen goods—an act which I confess was saved from the reproach of filial gratitude only by my exaction of all the profits.

But the vicissitudes of fortune are avoidable only by practice of the sternest indigence: human foresight cannot provide against the envy of the gods and the tireless machinations of Fate. The widening circle of prosperity grows weaker as it spreads until the antagonistic forces which it has pushed back are made powerful by compression to resist and finally overwhelm. So great grew the renown of my skill in medicine that patients were brought to me from all the four quarters of the globe. Burdensome invalids whose tardiness in dying was a perpetual grief to their friends; wealthy testators whose legatees were desirous to come by their own; superfluous children of penitent parents and dependent parents of frugal children; wives of husbands ambitious to remarry and husbands of wives without standing in the courts of divorce—these and all conceivable classes of the surplus population were conducted to my dispensary in the City of the

Gone Away. They came in incalculable multitudes.

Government agents brought me caravans of orphans, paupers, lunatics and all who had become a public charge. My skill in curing orphanism and pauperism was particularly acknowledged by a grateful parliament.

Naturally, all this promoted the public prosperity, for although I got the greater part of the money that strangers expended in the city, the rest went into the channels of trade, and I was myself a liberal investor, purchaser and employer, and a patron of the arts and sciences. The City of the Gone Away grew so rapidly that in a few years it had inclosed my cemetery, despite its own constant growth. In that fact lay the lion that rent me.

The Aldermen declared my cemetery a public evil and decided to take it from me, remove the bodies to another place and make a park of it. I was to be paid for it and could easily bribe the appraisers to fix a high price, but for a reason which will appear the decision gave me little joy. It was in vain that I protested against the sacrilege of disturbing the holy dead, although this was a powerful appeal, for in that land the dead are held in religious veneration. Temples are

built in their honor and a separate priesthood maintained at the public expense, whose only duty is performance of memorial services of the most solemn and touching kind. On four days in the year there is a Festival of the Good, as it is called, when all the people lay by their work or business and, headed by the priests, march in procession through the cemeteries, adorning the graves and praying in the temples. However bad a man's life may be, it is believed that when dead he enters into a state of eternal and inexpressible happiness. To signify a doubt of this is an offense punishable by death. To deny burial to the dead, or to exhume a buried body, except under sanction of law by special dispensation and with solemn ceremony, is a crime having no stated penalty because no one has ever had the hardihood to commit it.

All these considerations were in my favor, yet so well assured were the people and their civic officers that my cemetery was injurious to the public health that it was condemned and appraised, and with terror in my heart I received three times its value and began to settle up my affairs with all speed.

A week later was the day appointed for the formal inauguration of the ceremony of

removing the bodies. The day was fine and the entire population of the city and surrounding country was present at the imposing religious rites. These were directed by the mortuary priesthood in full canonicals. There was propitiatory sacrifice in the Temples of the Once, followed by a processional pageant of great splendor, ending at the cemetery. The Great Mayor in his robe of state led the procession. He was armed with a golden spade and followed by one hundred male and female singers, clad all in white and chanting the Hymn to the Gone Away. Behind these came the minor priesthood of the temples, all the civic authorities, habited in their official apparel, each carrying a living pig as an offering to the gods of the dead. Of the many divisions of the line, the last was formed by the populace, with uncovered heads, sifting dust into their hair in token of humility. In front of the mortuary chapel in the midst of the necropolis, the Supreme Priest stood in gorgeous vestments, supported on each hand by a line of bishops and other high dignitaries of his prelacy, all frowning with the utmost austerity. As the Great Mayor paused in the Presence, the minor clergy, the civic authorities, the choir and

populace closed in and encompassed the spot. The Great Mayor, laying his golden spade at the feet of the Supreme Priest, knelt in silence.

"Why comest thou here, presumptuous mortal?" said the Supreme Priest in clear, deliberate tones. "Is it thy unhallowed purpose with this implement to uncover the mysteries of death and break the repose of the Good?"

The Great Mayor, still kneeling, drew from his robe a document with portentous seals: "Behold, O ineffable, thy servant, having warrant of his people, entreateth at thy holy hands the custody of the Good, to the end and purpose that they lie in fitter earth, by consecration duly prepared against their coming."

With that he placed in the sacerdotal hands the order of the Council of Aldermen decreeing the removal. Merely touching the parchment, the Supreme Priest passed it to the Head Necropolitan at his side, and raising his hands relaxed the severity of his countenance and exclaimed: "The gods comply."

Down the line of prelates on either side, his gesture, look and words were successively repeated. The Great Mayor rose to his feet, the choir began a solemn chant and, opportunely, a funeral car drawn by ten white horses with black plumes rolled in at the gate

and made its way through the parting crowd to the grave selected for the occasion—that of a high official whom I had treated for chronic incumbency. The Great Mayor touched the grave with his golden spade (which he then presented to the Supreme Priest) and two stalwart diggers with iron ones set vigorously to work.

At that moment I was observed to leave the cemetery and the country; for a report of the rest of the proceedings I am indebted to my sainted father, who related it in a letter to me, written in jail the night before he had the irreparable misfortune to take the kink out of a rope.

As the workmen proceeded with their excavation, four bishops stationed themselves at the corners of the grave and in the profound silence of the multitude, broken otherwise only by the harsh grinding sound of spades, repeated continuously, one after another, the solemn invocations and responses from the Ritual of the Disturbed, imploring the blessed brother to forgive. But the blessed brother was not there. Full fathom two they mined for him in vain, then gave it up. The priests were visibly disconcerted, the populace was aghast, for that grave was indubitably vacant.

After a brief consultation with the Supreme Priest, the Great Mayor ordered the workmen to open another grave. The ritual was omitted this time until the coffin should be uncovered. There was no coffin, no body.

The cemetery was now a scene of the wildest confusion and dismay. The people shouted and ran hither and thither, gesticulating, clamoring, all talking at once, none listening. Some ran for spades, fire-shovels, hoes, sticks, anything. Some brought carpenters' adzes, even chisels from the marble works, and with these inadequate aids set to work upon the first graves they came to. Others fell upon the mounds with their bare hands, scraping away the earth as eagerly as dogs digging for marmots. Before nightfall the surface of the greater part of the cemetery had been upturned; every grave had been explored to the bottom and thousands of men were tearing away at the interspaces with as furious a frenzy as exhaustion would permit. As night came on torches were lighted, and in the sinister glare these frantic mortals, looking like a legion of fiends performing some unholy rite, pursued their disappointing work until they had devastated the entire area. But not a body did they find—not even a coffin.

The explanation is exceedingly simple. An important part of my income had been derived from the sale of *cadavres* to medical colleges, which never before had been so well supplied, and which, in added recognition of my services to science, had all bestowed upon me diplomas, degrees and fellowships without number. But their demand for *cadavres* was unequal to my supply: by even the most prodigal extravagances they could not consume the one-half of the products of my skill as a physician. As to the rest, I had owned and operated the most extensive and thoroughly appointed soapworks in all the country. The excellence of my "Toilet Homoline" was attested by certificates from scores of the saintliest theologians, and I had one in autograph from Badelina Fatti the most famous living soaprano.

THE MAJOR'S TALE

IN the days of the Civil War practical joking had not, I think, fallen into that disrepute which characterizes it now. That, doubtless, was owing to our extreme youth—men were much younger than now, and evermore your very young man has a boisterous spirit, running easily to horse-play. You cannot think how young the men were in the early sixties! Why, the average age of the entire Federal Army was not more than twenty-five; I doubt if it was more than twenty-three, but not having the statistics on that point (if there are any) I want to be moderate: we will say twenty-five. It is true a man of twenty-five was in that heroic time a good deal more of a man than one of that age is now; you could see that by looking at him. His face had nothing of that unripeness so conspicuous in his successor. I never see a young fellow now without observing how disagreebly young he really is; but during the war we did not think of a man's

age at all unless he happened to be pretty well along in life. In that case one could not help it, for the unloveliness of age assailed the human countenance then much earlier than now; the result, I suppose, of hard service—perhaps, to some extent, of hard drink, for, bless my soul! we did shed the blood of the grape and the grain abundantly during the war. I remember thinking General Grant, who could not have been more than forty, a pretty well preserved old chap, considering his habits. As to men of middle age—say from fifty to sixty—why, they all looked fit to personate the Last of the Hittites, or the Madagascarene Methuselah, in a museum. Depend upon it, my friends, men of that time were greatly younger than men are to-day, but looked much older. The change is quite remarkable.

I said that practical joking had not then gone out of fashion. It had not, at least, in the army; though possibly in the more serious life of the civilian it had no place except in the form of tarring and feathering an occasional "copperhead." You all know, I suppose, what a "copperhead" was, so I will go directly at my story without introductory remark, as is my way.

It was a few days before the battle of Nashville. The enemy had driven us up out of northern Georgia and Alabama. At Nashville we had turned at bay and fortified, while old Pap Thomas, our commander, hurried down reinforcements and supplies from Louisville. Meantime Hood, the Confederate commander, had partly invested us and lay close enough to have tossed shells into the heart of the town. As a rule he abstained—he was afraid of killing the families of his own soldiers, I suppose, a great many of whom had lived there. I sometimes wondered what were the feelings of those fellows, gazing over our heads at their own dwellings, where their wives and children or their aged parents were perhaps suffering for the necessaries of life, and certainly (so their reasoning would run) cowering under the tyranny and power of the barbarous Yankees.

To begin, then, at the beginning, I was serving at that time on the staff of a division commander whose name I shall not disclose, for I am relating facts, and the person upon whom they bear hardest may have surviving relatives who would not care to have him traced. Our headquarters were in a large dwelling which stood just behind our line of works. This had

been hastily abandoned by the civilian occupants, who had left everything pretty much as it was—had no place to store it, probably, and trusted that Heaven would preserve it from Federal cupidity and Confederate artillery. With regard to the latter we were as solicitous as they.

Rummaging about in some of the chambers and closets one evening, some of us found an abundant supply of lady-gear—gowns, shawls, bonnets, hats, petticoats and the Lord knows what; I could not at that time have named the half of it. The sight of all this pretty plunder inspired one of us with what he was pleased to call an "idea," which, when submitted to the other scamps and scapegraces of the staff, met with instant and enthusiastic approval. We proceeded at once to act upon it for the undoing of one of our comrades.

Our selected victim was an aide, Lieutenant Haberton, so to call him. He was a good soldier—as gallant a chap as ever wore spurs; but he had an intolerable weakness: he was a lady-killer, and like most of his class, even in those days, eager that all should know it. He never tired of relating his amatory exploits, and I need not say how dismal that kind of narrative is to all but the narrator.

It would be dismal even if sprightly and vivacious, for all men are rivals in woman's favor, and to relate your successes to another man is to rouse in him a dumb resentment, tempered by disbelief. You will not convince him that you tell the tale for his entertainment; he will hear nothing in it but an expression of your own vanity. Moreover, as most men, whether rakes or not, are willing to be thought rakes, he is very likely to resent a stupid and unjust inference which he suspects you to have drawn from his reticence in the matter of his own adventures—namely, that he has had none. If, on the other hand, he has had no scruple in the matter and his reticence is due to lack of opportunity to talk, or of nimbleness in taking advantage of it, why, then he will be surly because you "have the floor" when he wants it himself. There are, in short, no circumstances under which a man, even from the best of motives, or no motive at all, can relate his feats of love without distinctly lowering himself in the esteem of his male auditor; and herein lies a just punishment for such as kiss and tell. In my younger days I was myself not entirely out of favor with the ladies, and have a memory stored with much concerning them which doubtless I might put into accept-

able narrative had I not undertaken another tale, and if it were not my practice to relate one thing at a time, going straight away to the end, without digression.

Lieutenant Haberton was, it must be confessed, a singularly handsome man with engaging manners. He was, I suppose, judging from the imperfect view-point of my sex, what women call "fascinating." Now, the qualities which make a man attractive to ladies entail a double disadvantage. First, they are of a sort readily discerned by other men, and by none more readily than by those who lack them. Their possessor, being feared by all these, is habitually slandered by them in self-defense. To all the ladies in whose welfare they deem themselves entitled to a voice and interest they hint at the vices and general unworth of the "ladies' man" in no uncertain terms, and to their wives relate without shame the most monstrous falsehoods about him. Nor are they restrained by the consideration that he is their friend; the qualities which have engaged their own admiration make it necessary to warn away those to whom the allurement would be a peril. So the man of charming personality, while loved by all the ladies who know him well, yet not too well,

must endure with such fortitude as he may the consciousness that those others who know him only "by reputation" consider him a shameless reprobate, a vicious and unworthy man—a type and example of moral depravity. To name the second disadvantage entailed by his charms: he commonly is.

In order to get forward with our busy story (and in my judgment a story once begun should not suffer impedition) it is necessary to explain that a young fellow attached to our headquarters as an orderly was notably effeminate in face and figure. He was not more than seventeen and had a perfectly smooth face and large lustrous eyes, which must have been the envy of many a beautiful woman in those days. And how beautiful the women of those days were! and how gracious! Those of the South showed in their demeanor toward us Yankees something of *hauteur,* but, for my part, I found it less insupportable than the studious indifference with which one's attentions are received by the ladies of this new generation, whom I certainly think destitute of sentiment and sensibility.

This young orderly, whose name was Arman, we persuaded—by what arguments I am not bound to say—to clothe himself in

female attire and personate a lady. When we had him arrayed to our satisfaction—and a charming girl he looked—he was conducted to a sofa in the office of the adjutant-general. That officer was in the secret, as indeed were all excepting Haberton and the general; within the awful dignity hedging the latter lay possibilities of disapproval which we were unwilling to confront.

When all was ready I went to Haberton and said: "Lieutenant, there is a young woman in the adjutant-general's office. She is the daughter of the insurgent gentleman who owns this house, and has, I think, called to see about its present occupancy. We none of us know just how to talk to her, but we think perhaps you would say about the right thing—at least you will say things in the right way. Would you mind coming down?"

The lieutenant would not mind; he made a hasty toilet and joined me. As we were going along a passage toward the Presence we encountered a formidable obstacle—the general.

"I say, Broadwood," he said, addressing me in the familiar manner which meant that he was in excellent humor, "there's a lady in Lawson's office. Looks like a devilish fine

girl—came on some errand of mercy or justice, no doubt. Have the goodness to conduct her to my quarters. I won't saddle you youngsters with *all* the business of this division," he added facetiously.

This was awkward; something had to be done.

"General," I said, "I did not think the lady's business of sufficient importance to bother you with it. She is one of the Sanitary Commission's nurses, and merely wants to see about some supplies for the smallpox hospital where she is on duty. I'll send her in at once."

"You need not mind," said the general, moving on; "I dare say Lawson will attend to the matter."

Ah, the gallant general! how little I thought, as I looked after his retreating figure and laughed at the success of my ruse, that within the week he would be "dead on the field of honor!" Nor was he the only one of our little military household above whom gloomed the shadow of the death angel, and who might almost have heard "the beating of his wings." On that bleak December morning a few days later, when from an hour before dawn until ten o'clock we sat on horseback on

those icy hills, waiting for General Smith to open the battle miles away to the right, there were eight of us. At the close of the fighting there were three. There is now one. Bear with him yet a little while, oh, thrifty generation; he is but one of the horrors of war strayed from his era into yours. He is only the harmless skeleton at your feast and peace-dance, responding to your laughter and your footing it featly, with rattling fingers and bobbing skull—albeit upon suitable occasion, with a partner of his choosing, he might do his little dance with the best of you.

As we entered the adjutant-general's office we observed that the entire staff was there. The adjutant-general himself was exceedingly busy at his desk. The commissary of subsistence played cards with the surgeon in a bay window. The rest were in several parts of the room, reading or conversing in low tones. On a sofa in a half lighted nook of the room, at some distance from any of the groups, sat the "lady," closely veiled, her eyes modestly fixed upon her toes.

"Madam," I said, advancing with Haberton, "this officer will be pleased to serve you if it is in his power. I trust that it is."

With a bow I retired to the farther corner

of the room and took part in a conversation going on there, though I had not the faintest notion what it was about, and my remarks had no relevancy to anything under the heavens. A close observer would have noticed that we were all intently watching Haberton and only "making believe" to do anything else.

He was worth watching, too; the fellow was simply an *édition de luxe* of "Turvey-drop on Deportment." As the "lady" slowly unfolded her tale of grievances against our lawless soldiery and mentioned certain instances of wanton disregard of property rights —among them, as to the imminent peril of bursting our sides we partly overheard, the looting of her own wardrobe—the look of sympathetic agony in Haberton's handsome face was the very flower and fruit of histrionic art. His deferential and assenting nods at her several statements were so exquisitely performed that one could not help regretting their unsubstantial nature and the impossibility of preserving them under glass for instruction and delight of posterity. And all the time the wretch was drawing his chair nearer and nearer. Once or twice he looked about to see if we were observing, but we were in appearance blankly oblivious to all but one

another and our several diversions. The low hum of our conversation, the gentle tap-tap of the cards as they fell in play and the furious scratching of the adjutant-general's pen as he turned off countless pages of words without sense were the only sounds heard. No—there was another: at long intervals the distant boom of a heavy gun, followed by the approaching rush of the shot. The enemy was amusing himself.

On these occasions the lady was perhaps not the only member of that company who was startled, but she was startled more than the others, sometimes rising from the sofa and standing with clasped hands, the authentic portrait of terror and irresolution. It was no more than natural that Haberton should at these times reseat her with infinite tenderness, assuring her of her safety and regretting her peril in the same breath. It was perhaps right that he should finally possess himself of her gloved hand and a seat beside her on the sofa; but it certainly was highly improper for him to be in the very act of possessing himself of *both* hands when—boom, *whiz,* BANG!

We all sprang to our feet. A shell had crashed into the house and exploded in the room above us. Bushels of plaster fell among

us. That modest and murmurous young lady sprang erect.

"Jumping Jee-rusalem!" she cried.

Haberton, who had also risen, stood as one petrified—as a statue of himself erected on the site of his assassination. He neither spoke, nor moved, nor once took his eyes off the face of Orderly Arman, who was now flinging his girl-gear right and left, exposing his charms in the most shameless way; while out upon the night and away over the lighted camps into the black spaces between the hostile lines rolled the billows of our inexhaustible laughter! Ah, what a merry life it was in the old heroic days when men had not forgotten how to laugh!

Haberton slowly came to himself. He looked about the room less blankly; then by degrees fashioned his visage into the sickliest grin that ever libeled all smiling. He shook his head and looked knowing.

"You can't fool *me!*" he said.

CURRIED COW

MY Aunt Patience, who tilled a small farm in the state of Michigan, had a favorite cow. This creature was not a good cow, nor a profitable one, for instead of devoting a part of her leisure to secretion of milk and production of veal she concentrated all her faculties on the study of kicking. She would kick all day and get up in the middle of the night to kick. She would kick at anything—hens, pigs, posts, loose stones, birds in the air and fish leaping out of the water; to this impartial and catholic-minded beef, all were equal—all similarly undeserving. Like old Timotheus, who "raised a mortal to the skies," was my Aunt Patience's cow; though, in the words of a later poet than Dryden, she did it "more harder and more frequently." It was pleasing to see her open a passage for herself through a populous barnyard. She would flash out, right and left, first with one hind-leg and then with the other, and would sometimes, under favoring conditions, have a

considerable number of domestic animals in the air at once.

Her kicks, too, were as admirable in quality as inexhaustible in quantity. They were incomparably superior to those of the untutored kine that had not made the art a life study—mere amateurs that kicked "by ear," as they say in music. I saw her once standing in the road, professedly fast asleep, and mechanically munching her cud with a sort of Sunday morning lassitude, as one munches one's cud in a dream. Snouting about at her side, blissfully unconscious of impending danger and wrapped up in thoughts of his sweetheart, was a gigantic black hog—a hog of about the size and general appearance of a yearling rhinoceros. Suddenly, while I looked —without a visible movement on the part of the cow—with never a perceptible tremor of her frame, nor a lapse in the placid regularity of her chewing—that hog had gone away from there—had utterly taken his leave. But away toward the pale horizon a minute black speck was traversing the empyrean with the speed of a meteor, and in a moment had disappeared, without audible report, beyond the distant hills. It may have been that hog.

Currying cows is not, I think, a common

practice, even in Michigan; but as this one had never needed milking, of course she had to be subjected to some equivalent form of persecution; and irritating her skin with a curry-comb was thought as disagreeable an attention as a thoughtful affection could devise. At least she thought it so; though I suspect her mistress really meant it for the good creature's temporal advantage. Anyhow my aunt always made it a condition to the employment of a farm-servant that he should curry the cow every morning; but after just enough trials to convince himself that it was not a sudden spasm, nor a mere local disturbance, the man would always give notice of an intention to quit, by pounding the beast half-dead with some foreign body and then limping home to his couch. I don't know how many men the creature removed from my aunt's employ in this way, but judging from the number of lame persons in that part of the country, I should say a good many; though some of the lameness may have been taken at second-hand from the original sufferers by their descendants, and some may have come by contagion.

I think my aunt's was a faulty system of agriculture. It is true her farm labor cost her nothing, for the laborers all left her serv-

ice before any salary had accrued; but as the cow's fame spread abroad through the several States and Territories, it became increasingly difficult to obtain hands; and, after all, the favorite was imperfectly curried. It was currently remarked that the cow had kicked the farm to pieces—a rude metaphor, implying that the land was not properly cultivated, nor the buildings and fences kept in adequate repair.

It was useless to remonstrate with my aunt: she would concede everything, amending nothing. Her late husband had attempted to reform the abuse in this manner, and had had the argument all his own way until he had remonstrated himself into an early grave; and the funeral was delayed all day, until a fresh undertaker could be procured, the one originally engaged having confidingly undertaken to curry the cow at the request of the widow.

Since that time my Aunt Patience had not been in the matrimonial market; the love of that cow had usurped in her heart the place of a more natural and profitable affection. But when she saw her seeds unsown, her harvests ungarnered, her fences overtopped with rank brambles and her meadows gorgeous with the

towering Canada thistle she thought it best to take a partner.

When it transpired that my Aunt Patience intended wedlock there was intense popular excitement. Every adult single male became at once a marrying man. The criminal statistics of Badger county show that in that single year more marriages occurred than in any decade before or since. But none of them was my aunt's. Men married their cooks, their laundresses, their deceased wives' mothers, their enemies' sisters—married whomsoever would wed; and any man who, by fair means or courtship, could not obtain a wife went before a justice of the peace and made an affidavit that he had some wives in Indiana. Such was the fear of being married alive by my Aunt Patience.

Now, where my aunt's affection was concerned she was, as the reader will have already surmised, a rather determined woman; and the extraordinary marrying epidemic having left but one eligible male in all that county, she had set her heart upon that one eligible male; then she went and carted him to her home. He turned out to be a long Methodist parson, named Huggins.

Aside from his unconscionable length, the

Rev. Berosus Huggins was not so bad a fellow, and was nobody's fool. He was, I suppose, the most ill-favored mortal, however, in the whole northern half of America— thin, angular, cadaverous of visage and solemn out of all reason. He commonly wore a low-crowned black hat, set so far down upon his head as partly to eclipse his eyes and wholly obscure the ample glory of his ears. The only other visible article of his attire (except a brace of wrinkled cowskin boots, by which the word "polish" would have been considered the meaningless fragment of a lost language) was a tight-fitting black frock-coat, preternaturally long in the waist, the skirts of which fell about his heels, sopping up the dew. This he always wore snugly buttoned from the throat downward. In this attire he cut a tolerably spectral figure. His aspect was so conspicuously unnatural and inhuman that whenever he went into a cornfield, the predatory crows would temporarily forsake their business to settle upon him in swarms, fighting for the best seats upon his person, by way of testifying their contempt for the weak inventions of the husbandman.

The day after the wedding my Aunt Patience summoned the Rev. Berosus to the

council chamber, and uttered her mind to the following intent:

"Now, Huggy, dear, I'll tell you what there is to do about the place. First, you must repair all the fences, clearing out the weeds and repressing the brambles with a strong hand. Then you will have to exterminate the Canadian thistles, mend the wagon, rig up a plow or two, and get things into ship-shape generally. This will keep you out of mischief for the better part of two years; of course you will have to give up preaching, for the present. As soon as you have—O! I forgot poor Phœbe. She"——

"Mrs. Huggins," interrupted her solemn spouse, "I shall hope to be the means, under Providence, of effecting all needful reforms in the husbandry of this farm. But the sister you mention (I trust she is not of the world's people)—have I the pleasure of knowing her? The name, indeed, sounds familiar, but"——

"Not know Phœbe!" cried my aunt, with unfeigned astonishment; "I thought everybody in Badger knew Phœbe. Why, you will have to scratch her legs, every blessed morning of your natural life!"

"I assure you, madam," rejoined the Rev.

Berosus, with dignity, "it would yield me a hallowed pleasure to minister to the spiritual needs of sister Phœbe, to the extent of my feeble and unworthy ability; but, really, I fear the merely secular ministration of which you speak must be entrusted to abler and, I would respectfully suggest, female hands."

"Whyyy, youuu ooold, fooooool!" replied my aunt, spreading her eyes with unbounded amazement, "Phœbe is a *cow!*"

"In that case," said the husband, with unruffled composure, "it will, of course, devolve upon me to see that her carnal welfare is properly attended to; and I shall be happy to bestow upon her legs such time as I may, without sin, snatch from my strife with Satan and the Canadian thistles."

With that the Rev. Mr. Huggins crowded his hat upon his shoulders, pronounced a brief benediction upon his bride, and betook himself to the barn-yard.

Now, it is necessary to explain that he had known from the first who Phœbe was, and was familiar, from hearsay, with all her sinful traits. Moreover, he had already done himself the honor of making her a visit, remaining in the vicinity of her person, just out of range, for more than an hour and permitting

her to survey him at her leisure from every point of the compass. In short, he and Phœbe had mutually reconnoitered and prepared for action.

Amongst the articles of comfort and luxury which went to make up the good parson's *dot,* and which his wife had already caused to be conveyed to his new home, was a patent cast-iron pump, about seven feet high. This had been deposited near the barn-yard, preparatory to being set up on the planks above the barn-yard well. Mr. Huggins now sought out this invention and conveying it to its destination put it into position, screwing it firmly to the planks. He next divested himself of his long gaberdine and his hat, buttoning the former loosely about the pump, which it almost concealed, and hanging the latter upon the summit of the structure. The handle of the pump, when depressed, curved outwardly between the coat-skirts, singularly like a tail, but with this inconspicuous exception, any unprejudiced observer would have pronounced the thing Mr. Huggins, looking uncommonly well.

The preliminaries completed, the good man carefully closed the gate of the barnyard, knowing that as soon as Phœbe, who was

campaigning in the kitchen garden, should note the precaution she would come and jump in to frustrate it, which eventually she did. Her master, meanwhile, had laid himself, coatless and hatless, along the outside of the close board fence, where he put in the time pleasantly, catching his death of cold and peering through a knot-hole.

At first, and for some time, the animal pretended not to see the figure on the platform. Indeed she had turned her back upon it directly she arrived, affecting a light sleep. Finding that this stratagem did not achieve the success that she had expected, she abandoned it and stood for several minutes irresolute, munching her cud in a half-hearted way, but obviously thinking very hard. Then she began nosing along the ground as if wholly absorbed in a search for something that she had lost, tacking about hither and thither, but all the time drawing nearer to the object of her wicked intention. Arrived within speaking distance, she stood for a little while confronting the fraudful figure, then put out her nose toward it, as if to be caressed, trying to create the impression that fondling and dalliance were more to her than wealth, power and the plaudits of the populace—that she

had been accustomed to them all her sweet young life and could not get on without them. Then she approached a little nearer, as if to shake hands, all the while maintaining the most amiable expression of countenance and executing all manner of seductive nods and winks and smiles. Suddenly she wheeled about and with the rapidity of lightning dealt out a terrible kick—a kick of inconceivable force and fury, comparable to nothing in nature but a stroke of paralysis out of a clear sky!

The effect was magical! Cows kick, not backward but sidewise. The impact which was intended to project the counterfeit theologian into the middle of the succeeding conference week reacted upon the animal herself, and it and the pain together set her spinning like a top. Such was the velocity of her revolution that she looked like a dim, circular cow, surrounded by a continuous ring like that of the planet Saturn—the white tuft at the extremity of her sweeping tail! Presently, as the sustaining centrifugal force lessened and failed, she began to sway and wabble from side to side, and finally, toppling over on her side, rolled convulsively on her back and lay motionless with all her feet in

the air, honestly believing that the world had somehow got atop of her and she was supporting it at a great sacrifice of personal comfort. Then she fainted.

How long she lay unconscious she knew not, but at last she unclosed her eyes, and catching sight of the open door of her stall, "more sweet than all the landscape smiling near," she struggled up, stood wavering upon three legs, rubbed her eyes, and was visibly bewildered as to the points of the compass. Observing the iron clergyman standing fast by its faith, she threw it a look of grieved reproach and hobbled heart-broken into her humble habitation, a subjugated cow.

For several weeks Phœbe's right hind leg was swollen to a monstrous growth, but by a season of judicious nursing she was "brought round all right," as her sympathetic and puzzled mistress phrased it, or "made whole," as the reticent man of God preferred to say. She was now as tractable and inoffensive "in her daily walk and conversation" (Huggins) as a little child. Her new master used to take her ailing leg trustfully into his lap, and for that matter, might have taken in into his mouth if he had so desired. Her entire character appeared to be radically changed—

so altered that one day my Aunt Patience, who, fondly as she loved her, had never before so much as ventured to touch the hem of her garment, as it were, went confidently up to her to soothe her with a pan of turnips. Gad! how thinly she spread out that good old lady upon the face of an adjacent stone wall! You could not have done it so evenly with a trowel.

A REVOLT OF THE GODS

MY father was a deodorizer of dead dogs, my mother kept the only shop for the sale of cats'-meat in my native city. They did not live happily; the difference in social rank was a chasm which could not be bridged by the vows of marriage. It was indeed an ill-assorted and most unlucky alliance; and as might have been foreseen it ended in disaster. One morning after the customary squabbles at breakfast, my father rose from the table, quivering and pale with wrath, and proceeding to the parsonage thrashed the clergyman who had performed the marriage ceremony. The act was generally condemned and public feeling ran so high against the offender that people would permit dead dogs to lie on their property until the fragrance was deafening rather than employ him; and the municipal authorities suffered one bloated old mastiff to utter itself from a public square in so clamorous an exhalation that passing strangers supposed themselves to be in the vicinity of a

saw-mill. My father was indeed unpopular. During these dark days the family's sole dependence was on my mother's emporium for cats'-meat.

The business was profitable. In that city, which was the oldest in the world, the cat was an object of veneration. Its worship was the religion of the country. The multiplication and addition of cats were a perpetual instruction in arithmetic. Naturally, any inattention to the wants of a cat was punished with great severity in this world and the next; so my good mother numbered her patrons by the hundred. Still, with an unproductive husband and seventeen children she had some difficulty in making both ends cats'-meat; and at last the necessity of increasing the discrepancy between the cost price and the selling price of her carnal wares drove her to an expedient which proved eminently disastrous: she conceived the unlucky notion of retaliating by refusing to sell cats'-meat until the boycott was taken off her husband.

On the day when she put this resolution into practice the shop was thronged with excited customers, and others extended in turbulent and restless masses up four streets, out of sight. Inside there was nothing but cursing,

crowding, shouting and menace. Intimidation was freely resorted to—several of my younger brothers and sisters being threatened with cutting up for the cats—but my mother was as firm as a rock, and the day was a black one for Sardasa, the ancient and sacred city that was the scene of these events. The lock-out was vigorously maintained, and seven hundred and fifty thousand cats went to bed hungry!

The next morning the city was found to have been placarded during the night with a proclamation of the Federated Union of Old Maids. This ancient and powerful order averred through its Supreme Executive Head that the boycotting of my father and the retaliatory lock-out of my mother were seriously imperiling the interests of religion. The proclamation went on to state that if arbitration were not adopted by noon that day all the old maids of the federation would strike—and strike they did.

The next act of this unhappy drama was an insurrection of cats. These sacred animals, seeing themselves doomed to starvation, held a mass-meeting and marched in procession through the streets, swearing and spitting like fiends. This revolt of the gods produced such

consternation that many pious persons died of fright and all business was suspended to bury them and pass terrifying resolutions.

Matters were now about as bad as it seemed possible for them to be. Meetings among representatives of the hostile interests were held, but no understanding was arrived at that would hold. Every agreement was broken as soon as made, and each element of the discord was frantically appealing to the people. A new horror was in store.

It will be remembered that my father was a deodorizer of dead dogs, but was unable to practice his useful and humble profession because no one would employ him. The dead dogs in consequence reeked rascally. Then they struck! From every vacant lot and public dumping ground, from every hedge and ditch and gutter and cistern, every crystal rill and the clabbered waters of all the canals and estuaries—from all the places, in short, which from time immemorial have been preëmpted by dead dogs and consecrated to the uses of them and their heirs and successors forever—they trooped innumerous, a ghastly crew! Their procession was a mile in length. Midway of the town it met the procession of cats in full song. The cats instantly exalted their

backs and magnified their tails; the dead dogs uncovered their teeth as in life, and erected such of their bristles as still adhered to the skin.

The carnage that ensued was too awful for relation! The light of the sun was obscured by flying fur, and the battle was waged in the darkness, blindly and regardless. The swearing of the cats was audible miles away, while the fragrance of the dead dogs desolated seven provinces.

How the battle might have resulted it is impossible to say, but when it was at its fiercest the Federated Union of Old Maids came running down a side street and sprang into the thickest of the fray. A moment later my mother herself bore down upon the warring hosts, brandishing a cleaver, and laid about her with great freedom and impartiality. My father joined the fight, the municipal authorities engaged, and the general public, converging on the battle-field from all points of the compass, consumed itself in the center as it pressed in from the circumference. Last of all, the dead held a meeting in the cemetery and resolving on a general strike, began to destroy vaults, tombs, monuments, headstones, willows, angels and young sheep in

marble—everything they could lay their hands on. By nightfall the living and the dead were alike exterminated, and where the ancient and sacred city of Sardasa had stood nothing remained but an excavation filled with dead bodies and building materials, shreds of cat and blue patches of decayed dog. The place is now a vast pool of stagnant water in the center of a desert.

The stirring events of those few days constituted my industrial education, and so well have I improved my advantages that I am now Chief of Misrule to the Dukes of Disorder, an organization numbering thirteen million American workingmen.

THE BAPTISM OF DOBSHO

IT was a wicked thing to do, certainly. I have often regretted it since, and if the opportunity of doing so again were presented I should hesitate a long time before embracing it. But I was young then, and cherished a species of humor which I have since abjured. Still, when I remember the character of the people who were burlesquing and bringing into disrepute the letter and spirit of our holy religion I feel a certain satisfaction in having contributed one feeble effort toward making them ridiculous. In consideration of the little good I may have done in that way, I beg the reader to judge my conceded error as leniently as possible. This is the story.

Some years ago the town of Harding, in Illinois, experienced "a revival of religion," as the people called it. It would have been more accurate and less profane to term it a revival of Rampageanism, for the craze originated in, and was disseminated by, the sect which I will call the Rampagean communion;

and most of the leaping and howling was done in that interest. Amongst those who yielded to the influence was my friend Thomas Dobsho. Tom had been a pretty bad sinner in a small way, but he went into this new thing heart and soul. At one of the meetings he made a public confession of more sins than he ever was, or ever could have been guilty of; stopping just short of statutory crimes, and even hinting, significantly, that he could tell a good deal more if he were pressed. He wanted to join the absurd communion the very evening of his conversion. He wanted to join two or three communions. In fact, he was so carried away with his zeal that some of the brethren gave me a hint to take him home; he and I occupied adjoining apartments in the Elephant Hotel.

Tom's fervor, as it happened, came near defeating its own purpose; instead of taking him at once into the fold without reference or "character," which was their usual way, the brethren remembered against him his awful confessions and put him on probation. But after a few weeks, during which he conducted himself like a decent lunatic, it was decided to baptise him along with a dozen other pretty hard cases who had been converted more

recently. This sacrilegious ceremony I persuaded myself it was my duty to prevent, though I think now I erred as to the means adopted. It was to take place on a Sunday, and on the preceding Saturday I called on the head revivalist, the Rev. Mr. Swin, and craved an interview.

"I come," said I, with simulated reluctance and embarrassment, "in behalf of my friend, Brother Dobsho, to make a very delicate and unusual request. You are, I think, going to baptise him to-morrow, and I trust it will be to him the beginning of a new and better life. But I don't know if you are aware that his family are all Plungers, and that he is himself tainted with the wicked heresy of that sect. So it is. He is, as one might say in secular metaphor, 'on the fence' between their grievous error and the pure faith of your church. It would be most melancholy if he should get down on the wrong side. Although I confess with shame I have not myself embraced the truth, I hope I am not too blind to see where it lies."

"The calamity that you apprehend," said the reverend lout, after solemn reflection, "would indeed seriously affect our friend's interest and endanger his soul. I had not ex-

pected Brother Dobsho so soon to give up the good fight."

"I think sir," I replied reflectively, "there is no fear of that if the matter is skilfully managed. He is heartily with you—might I venture to say with *us?*—on every point but one. He favors immersion! He has been so vile a sinner that he foolishly fears the more simple rite of your church will not make him wet enough. Would you believe it? his uninstructed scruples on the point are so gross and materialistic that he actually suggested soaping himself as a preparatory ceremony! I believe, however, if instead of sprinkling my friend, you would pour a generous basinful of water on his head—but now that I think of it in your enlightening presence I see that such a proceeding is quite out of the question. I fear we must let matters take the usual course, trusting to our later efforts to prevent the backsliding which may result."

The parson rose and paced the floor a moment, then suggested that he 'd better see Brother Dobsho, and labor to remove his error. I told him I thought not; I was sure it would not be best. Argument would only confirm him in his prejudices. So it was settled that the subject should not be broached

in that quarter. It would have been bad for me if it had been.

When I reflect now upon the guile of that conversation, the falsehood of my representations and the wickedness of my motive I am almost ashamed to proceed with my narrative. Had the minister been other than an arrant humbug, I hope I should never have suffered myself to make him the dupe of a scheme so sacrilegious in itself, and prosecuted with so sinful a disregard of honor.

The memorable Sabbath dawned bright and beautiful. About nine o'clock the cracked old bell, rigged up on struts before the "meeting-house," began to clamor its call to service, and nearly the whole population of Harding took its way to the performance. I had taken the precaution to set my watch fifteen minutes fast. Tom was nervously preparing himself for the ordeal. He fidgeted himself into his best suit an hour before the time, carried his hat about the room in the most aimless and demented way and consulted his watch a hundred times. I was to accompany him to church, and I spent the time fussing about the room, doing the most extraordinary things in the most exasperating manner—in short, keeping up Tom's feverish excitement by every wicked

device I could think of. Within a half hour of the real time for service I suddenly yelled out—

"O, I say, Tom; pardon me, but that head of yours is just frightful! Please *do* let me brush it up a bit!"

Seizing him by the shoulders I thrust him into a chair with his face to the wall, laid hold of his comb and brush, got behind him and went to work. He was trembling like a child, and knew no more what I was doing than if he had been brained. Now, Tom's head was a curiosity. His hair, which was remarkably thick, was like wire. Being cut rather short it stood out all over his scalp like the spines on a porcupine. It had been a favorite complaint of Tom's that he never could do anything to that head. I found no difficulty—I did something to it, though I blush to think what it was. I did something which I feared he might discover if he looked in the mirror, so I carelessly pulled out my watch, sprung it open, gave a start and shouted—

"By Jove! Thomas—pardon the oath—but we're late. Your watch is all wrong; look at mine! Here's your hat, old fellow; come along. There's not a moment to lose!"

Clapping his hat on his head, I pulled him out of the house, with actual violence. In five minutes more we were in the meeting-house with ever so much time to spare.

The services that day, I am told, were specially interesting and impressive, but I had a good deal else on my mind—was preoccupied, absent, inattentive. They might have varied from the usual profane exhibition in any respect and to any extent, and I should not have observed it. The first thing I clearly perceived was a rank of "converts" kneeling before the "altar," Tom at the left of the line. Then the Rev. Mr. Swin approached him, thoughtfully dipping his fingers into a small earthern bowl of water as if he had just finished dining. I was much affected: I could see nothing distinctly for my tears. My handkerchief was at my face—most of it inside. I was observed to sob spasmodically, and I am abashed to think how many sincere persons mistakenly followed my example.

With some solemn words, the purport of which I did not quite make out, except that they sounded like swearing, the minister stood before Thomas, gave me a glance of intelligence and then with an innocent expression of face, the recollection of which to this day

fills me with remorse, spilled, as if by accident, the entire contents of the bowl on the head of my poor friend—that head into the hair of which I had sifted a prodigal profusion of Seidlitz-powders!

I confess it, the effect was magical—anyone who was present would tell you that. Tom's pow simmered—it seethed—it foamed yeastily, and slavered like a mad dog! It steamed and hissed, with angry spurts and flashes! In a second it had grown bigger than a small snowbank, and whiter. It surged, and boiled, and walloped, and overflowed, and sputtered—sent off feathery flakes like down from a shot swan! The froth poured creaming over his face, and got into his eyes. It was the most sinful shampooing of the season!

I cannot relate the commotion this produced, nor would I if I could. As to Tom, he sprang to his feet and staggered out of the house, groping his way between the pews, sputtering strangled profanity and gasping like a stranded fish. The other candidates for baptism rose also, shaking their pates as if to say, "No you don't, my hearty," and left the house in a body. Amidst unbroken silence the minister reascended the pulpit with the empty bowl in his hand, and was first to speak:

"Brethren and sisters," said he with calm, deliberate evenness of tone, "I have held forth in this tabernacle for many more years than I have got fingers and toes, and during that time I have known not guile, nor anger, nor any uncharitableness. As to Henry Barber, who put up this job on me, I judge him not lest I be judged. Let him take *that* and sin no more!"—and he flung the earthern bowl with so true an aim that it was shattered against my skull. The rebuke was not undeserved, I confess, and I trust I have profited by it.

THE RACE AT LEFT BOWER

IT'S all very well fer you Britishers to go assin' about the country tryin' to strike the trail o' the mines you've salted down yer loose carpital in," said Colonel Jackhigh, setting his empty glass on the counter and wiping his lips with his coat sleeve; "but w'en it comes to hoss racin', w'y I've got a cayuse ken lay over all the thurrerbreds yer little mantel-ornyment of a island ever panned out—bet yer britches I have! Talk about yer Durby winners—w'y this pisen little beast o' mine'll take the bit in her teeth and show 'em the way to the horizon like she was takin' her mornin' stroll and they was tryin' to keep an eye on her to see she didn't do herself an injury—that's w'at she would! And she haint never run a race with anything spryer'n an Injun in all her life; she's a green amatoor, *she* is!"

"Oh, very well," said the Englishman with a quiet smile; "it is easy enough to settle the matter. My animal is in tolerably good condition, and if yours is in town we can have the

race to-morrow for any stake you like, up to a hundred dollars.

"That's jest the figger," said the colonel; "dot it down, barkeep. But it's like slarterin' the innocents," he added, half-remorsefully, as he turned to leave; "it's bettin' on a dead sure thing—that's what it is! If my cayuse knew wa't I was about she'd go and break a laig to make the race a fair one."

So it was arranged that the race was to come off at three o'clock the next day, on the *mesa,* some distance from town. As soon as the news got abroad, the whole population of Left Bower and vicinity knocked off work and assembled in the various bars to discuss it. The Englishman and his horse were general favorites, and aside from the unpopularity of the colonel, nobody had ever seen his "cayuse." Still the element of patriotism came in, making the betting very nearly even.

A race-course was marked off on the *mesa* and at the appointed hour every one was there except the colonel. It was arranged that each man should ride his own horse, and the Englishman, who had acquired something of the free-and-easy bearing that distinguishes the "mining sharp," was already atop of his magnificent animal, with one leg thrown carelessly

across the pommel of his Mexican saddle, as he puffed his cigar with calm confidence in the result of the race. He was conscious, too, that he possessed the secret sympathy of all, even of those who had felt it their duty to bet against him. The judge, watch in hand, was growing impatient, when the colonel appeared about a half-mile away, and bore down upon the crowd. Everyone was eager to inspect his mount; and such a mount as it proved to be was never before seen, even in Left Bower!

You have seen "perfect skeletons" of horses often enough, no doubt, but this animal was not even a perfect skeleton; there were bones missing here and there which you would not have believed the beast could have spared. "Little" the colonel had called her! She was not an inch less than eighteen hands high, and long out of all reasonable proportion. She was so hollow in the back that she seemed to have been bent in a machine. She had neither tail nor mane, and her neck, as long as a man, stuck straight up into the air, supporting a head without ears. Her eyes had an expression in them of downright insanity, and the muscles of her face were afflicted with periodical convulsions that drew back the cor-

ners of the mouth and wrinkled the upper lip so as to produce a ghastly grin every two or three seconds. In color she was "claybank," with great blotches of white, as if she had been pelted with small bags of flour. The crookedness of her legs was beyond all comparison, and as to her gait it was that of a blind camel walking diagonally across innumerable deep ditches. Altogether she looked like the crude result of Nature's first experiment in equifaction.

As this libel on all horses shambled up to the starting post there was a general shout; the sympathies of the crowd changed in the twinkling of an eye! Everyone wanted to bet on her, and the Englishman himself was only restrained from doing so by a sense of honor. It was growing late, however, and the judge insisted on starting them. They got off very well together, and seeing the mare was unconscionably slow the Englishman soon pulled his animal in and permitted the ugly thing to pass him, so as to enjoy a back view of her. That sealed his fate. The course had been marked off in a circle of two miles in circumference and some twenty feet wide, the limits plainly defined by little furrows. Before the animals had gone a half mile both had been

permitted to settle down into a comfortable walk, in which they continued three-fourths of the way round the ring. Then the Englishman thought it time to whip up and canter in.

But he didn't. As he came up alongside the "Lightning Express," as the crowd had begun to call her, that creature turned her head diagonally backward and let fall a smile. The encroaching beast stopped as if he had been shot! His rider plied whip, and forced him again forward upon the track of the equine hag, but with the same result.

The Englishman was now alarmed; he struggled manfully with rein and whip and shout, amidst the tremendous cheering and inextinguishable laughter of the crowd, to force his animal past, now on this side, now on that, but it would not do. Prompted by the fiend in the concavity of her back, the unthinkable quadruped dropped her grins right and left with such seasonable accuracy that again and again the competing beast was struck "all of a heap" just at the moment of seeming success. And, finally, when by a tremendous spurt his rider endeavored to thrust him by, within half a dozen lengths of the winning post, the incarnate nightmare turned squarely about and fixed upon him a

portentous stare—delivering at the same time a grimace of such prodigious ghastliness that the poor thoroughbred, with an almost human scream of terror, wheeled about, and tore away to the rear with the speed of the wind, leaving the colonel an easy winner in twenty minutes and ten seconds.

THE FAILURE OF HOPE & WANDEL

From Mr. Jabez Hope, in Chicago, to Mr. Pike Wandel, of New Orleans, December 2, 1877.

I WILL not bore you, my dear fellow, with a narrative of my journey from New Orleans to this polar region. It is cold in Chicago, believe me, and the Southron who comes here, as I did, without a relay of noses and ears will have reason to regret his mistaken economy in arranging his outfit.

To business. Lake Michigan is frozen stiff. Fancy, O child of a torrid clime, a sheet of anybody's ice, three hundred miles long, forty broad, and six feet thick! It sounds like a lie, Pikey dear, but your partner in the firm of Hope & Wandel, Wholesale Boots and Shoes, New Orleans, is never known to fib. My plan is to collar that ice. Wind up the present business and send on the money at once. I'll put

up a warehouse as big as the Capitol at Washington, store it full and ship to your orders as the Southern market may require. I can send it in planks for skating floors, in statuettes for the mantel, in shavings for juleps, or in solution for ice cream and general purposes. It is a big thing!

I inclose a thin slip as a sample. Did you ever see such charming ice?

From Mr. Pike Wandel, of New Orleans, to Mr. Jabez Hope, in Chicago, December 24, 1877.

Your letter was so abominably defaced by blotting and blurring that it was entirely illegible. It must have come all the way by water. By the aid of chemicals and photography, however, I have made it out. But you forgot to inclose the sample of ice.

I have sold off everything (at an alarming sacrifice, I am sorry to say) and inclose draft for net amount. Shall begin to spar for orders at once. I trust everything to you—but, I say, has anybody tried to grow ice in *this* vicinity? There is Lake Ponchartrain, you know.

From Mr. Jabez Hope, in Chicago, to Mr. Pike Wandel, of New Orleans, February 27, 1878.

Wannie dear, it would do you good to see our new warehouse for the ice. Though made of boards, and run up rather hastily, it is as pretty as a picture, and cost a deal of money, though I pay no ground rent. It is about as big as the Capitol at Washington. Do you think it ought to have a steeple? I have it nearly filled—fifty men cutting and storing, day and night—awful cold work! By the way, the ice, which when I wrote you last was ten feet thick, is now thinner. But don't you worry; there is plenty.

Our warehouse is eight or ten miles out of town, so I am not much bothered by visitors, which is a relief. Such a giggling, sniggering lot you never saw!

It seems almost too absurdly incredible, Wannie, but do you know I believe this ice of ours gains in coldness as the warm weather comes on! I do, indeed, and you may mention the fact in the advertisements.

From Mr. Pike Wandel, of New Orleans, to

Mr. Jabez Hope, in Chicago, March 7, 1878.

All goes well. I get hundreds of orders. We shall do a roaring trade as "The New Orleans and Chicago Semperfrigid Ice Company." But you have not told me whether the ice is fresh or salt. If it is fresh it won't do for cooking, and if it is salt it will spoil the mint juleps.

Is it as cold in the middle as the outside cuts are?

From Mr. Jebez Hope, from Chicago, to Mr. Pike Wandel, of New Orleans, April 3, 1878.

Navigation on the Lakes is now open, and ships are thick as ducks. I'm afloat, *en route* for Buffalo, with the assets of the New Orleans and Chicago Semperfrigid Ice Company in my vest pocket. We are busted out, my poor Pikey—we are to fortune and to fame unknown. Arrange a meeting of the creditors and don't attend.

Last night a schooner from Milwaukee was smashed into match-wood on an enormous

mass of floating ice—the first berg ever seen in these waters. It is described by the survivors as being about as big as the Capital at Washington. One-half of that iceberg belongs to you, Pikey.

The melancholy fact is, I built our warehouse on an unfavorable site, about a mile out from the shore (on the ice, you understand), and when the thaw came—O my God, Wannie, it was the saddest thing you ever saw in all your life! You will be *so* glad to know I was not in it at the time.

What a ridiculous question you ask me. My poor partner, you don't seem to know very much about the ice business.

PERRY CHUMLY'S ECLIPSE

THE spectroscope is a singularly beautiful and delicate instrument, consisting, essentially, of a prism of glass, which, decomposing the light of any heavenly body to which the instrument is directed, presents a spectrum, or long bar of color. Crossing this are narrow, dark and bright lines produced by the gases of metals in combustion, whereby the celestial orb's light is generated. From these dark and bright lines, therefore, we ascertain all that is worth knowing about the composition of the sun and stars.

Now Ben had made some striking discoveries in spectroscopic analysis at his private garden observatory, and had also an instrument of superior power and capacity, invented, or at least much improved, by himself; and this instrument it was that he and I were arranging for an examination of the comet then flaming in the heavens. William sat by

apparently uninterested. Finally we had our arrangements for an observation completed, and Ben said: "Now turn her on."

"That reminds me," said William, "of a little story about Perry Chumly, who—"

"For the sake of science, William," I interrupted, laying a hand on his arm, "I must beg you not to relate it. The comet will in a few minutes be behind the roof of yonder lodging house. We really have no time for the story."

"No," said Ben, "time presses; and, anyhow, I've heard it before."

"This Perry Chumly," resumed William, "believed himself a born astronomer, and always kept a bit of smoked glass. He was particularly great on solar eclipses. I have known him to sit up all night looking out for one."

Ben had now got the spectroscope trained skyward to suit him, and in order to exclude all irrelevant light had let down the window-blind on the tube of it. The spectrum of the comet came out beautifully—a long bar of color crossed with a lovely ruling of thin dark and bright lines, the sight of which elicited from us an exclamation of satisfaction.

"One day," continued William from his seat at another window, "some one told Perry

Chumly there would be an eclipse of the sun that afternoon at three o'clock. Now Perry had recently read a story about some men who in exploring a deep cañon in the mountains had looked up from the bottom and seen the stars shining at midday. It occurred to him that this knowledge might be so utilized as to give him a fine view of the eclipse, and enable him at the same time to see what the stars would appear to think about it."

"This," said Ben, pointing to one of the dark lines in the cometic spectrum, *"this* is produced by the vapor of carbon in the nucleus of the heavenly visitant. You will observe that it differs but slightly from the lines that come of volatilized iron. Examined with this magnifying glass"—adjusting that instrument to his eye—"it will probably show—by Jove!" he ejaculated, after a nearer view, "it isn't carbon at all. *It is* MEAT!"

"Of course," proceeded William, "of course Perry Chumly did not have any cañon, so what did the fellow do but let himself down with his arms and legs to the bottom of an old well, about thirty feet deep! And, with the cold water up to his middle, and the frogs, polly-wogs and aquatic lizards quarreling for the cosy corners of his pockets, there he stood,

waiting for the sun to appear in the field of his 'instrument' and be eclipsed."

"Ben, you are joking," I remarked with some asperity; "you are taking liberties with science, Benjamin. It *can't* be meat, you know."

"I tell you it *is* though," was his excited reply; "it is just *meat,* I tell you! And this other line, which at first I took for sodium, is *bone*—bone, sir, or I'm an asteroid! I never saw the like; that comet must be densely peopled with butchers and horse-knackers!"

"When Perry Chumly had waited a long time," William went on to say, "looking up and expecting every minute to see the sun, it began to get into his mind, somehow, that the bright, circular opening above his head—the mouth of the well—*was* the sun, and that the black disk of the moon was all that was needed to complete the expected phenomenon. The notion soon took complete posession of his brain, so that he forgot where he was and imagined himself standing on the surface of the earth."

I was now scrutinizing the cometic spectrum very closely, being particularly attracted by a thin, faint line, which I thought Ben had overlooked.

"Oh, that is nothing," he explained; "that's a mere local fault arising from conditions peculiar to the medium through which the light is transmitted—the atmosphere of this neighborhood. It is whisky. This other line, though, shows the faintest imaginable trace of soap; and these uncertain, wavering ones are caused by some effluvium not in the comet itself, but in the region beyond it. I am compelled to pronounce it tobacco smoke. I will now tilt the instrument so as to get the spectrum of the celestial wanderer's tail. Ah! there we have it. Splendid!"

"Now this old well," said William, "was near a road, along which was traveling a big and particularly hideous nigger."

"See here, Thomas," exclaimed Ben, removing the magnifying glass from his eye and looking me earnestly in the face, "if I were to tell you that the *coma* of this eccentric heavenly body is really hair, as its name implies, would you believe it?"

"No, Ben, I certainly should not."

"Well, I won't argue the matter; there are the lines—they speak for themselves. But now that I look again, you are not entirely wrong: there is a considerable admixture of jute, moss, and I think tallow. It certainly is

most remarkable! Sir Isaac Newton——"

"That big nigger," drawled William, "felt thirsty, and seeing the mouth of the well thought there was perhaps a bucket in it. So he ventured to creep forward on his hands and knees and look in over the edge."

Suddenly our spectrum vanished, and a very singular one of a quite different appearance presented itself in the same place. It was a dim spectrum, crossed by a single broad bar of pale yellow.

"Ah!" said Ben, "our waif of the upper deep is obscured by a cloud; let us see what the misty veil is made of."

He took a look at the spectrum with his magnifying glass, started back, and muttered: "Brown linen, by thunder!"

"You can imagine the rapture of Perry Chumly," pursued the indefatigable William, "when he saw, as he supposed, the moon's black disk encroaching upon the body of the luminary that had so long riveted his gaze. But when that obscuring satellite had thrust herself so far forward that the eclipse became almost annular, and he saw her staring down upon a darkened world with glittering white eyes and a double row of flashing teeth, it is perhaps not surprising that he vented a

scream of terror, fainted and collapsed among his frogs! As for the big nigger, almost equally terrified by this shriek from the abyss, he executed a precipitate movement which only the breaking of his neck prevented from being a double back-somersault, and lay dead in the weeds with his tongue out and his face the color of a cometic spectrum. We laid them in the same grave, poor fellows, and on many a still summer evening afterward I strayed to the lonely little church-yard to listen to the smothered requiem chanted by the frogs that we had neglected to remove from the pockets of the lamented astronomer.

"And, now," added William, taking his heels from the window, "as you can not immediately resume your spectroscopic observations on that red-haired chamber-maid in the dormer-window, who pulled down the blind when I made a mouth at her, I move that we adjourn."

A PROVIDENTIAL INTIMATION

MR. ALGERNON JARVIS, of San Francisco, got up cross. The world of Mr. Jarvis had gone wrong with him overnight, as one's world is likely to do when one sits up till morning with jovial friends, to watch it, and he was prone to resentment. No sooner, therefore, had he got himself into a neat, fashionable suit of clothing than he selected his morning walking-stick and sallied out upon the town with a vague general determination to attack something. His first victim would naturally have been his breakfast; but singularly enough, he fell upon this with so feeble an energy that he was himself beaten—to the grieved astonishment of the worthy *rôtisseur,* who had to record his hitherto puissant patron's maiden defeat. Three or four cups of *café noir* were the only captives that graced Mr. Jarvis' gastric chariot-wheels that morning.

He lit a long cigar and sauntered moodily down the street, so occupied with schemes of

universal retaliation that his feet had it all their own way; in consequence of which, their owner soon found himself in the billiard-room of the Occidental Hotel. Nobody was there, but Mr. Jarvis was a privileged person; so, going to the marker's desk, he took out a little box of ivory balls, spilled them carelessly over a table and languidly assailed them with a long stick.

Presently, by the merest chance, he executed a marvelous stroke. Waiting till the astonished balls had resumed their composure, he gathered them up, replacing them in their former position. He tried the stroke again, and, naturally, did not make it. Again he placed the balls, and again he badly failed. With a vexed and humilated air he once more put the indocile globes into position, leaned over the table and was upon the point of striking, when there sounded a solemn voice from behind:

"Bet you two bits you don't make it!"

Mr. Jarvis erected himself; he turned about and looked at the speaker, whom he found to be a stranger—one that most persons would prefer should remain a stranger. Mr. Jarvis made no reply. In the first place, he was a man of aristocratic taste, to whom a

wager of "two bits" was simply vulgar. Secondly, the man who had proffered it evidently had not the money. Still it is annoying to have one's skill questioned by one's social inferiors, particularly when one has doubts of it oneself, and is otherwise ill-tempered. So Mr. Jarvis stood his cue against the table, laid off his fashionable morning-coat, resumed his stick, spread his fine figure upon the table with his back to the ceiling and took deliberate aim.

At this point Mr. Jarvis drops out of this history, and is seen no more forever. Persons of the class to which he adds lustre are sacred from the pen of the humorist; they are ridiculous but not amusing. So now we will dismiss this uninteresting young aristocrat, retaining merely his outer shell, the fashionable morning-coat, which Mr. Stenner, the gentleman, who had offered the wager, has quietly thrown across his arm and is conveying away for his own advantage.

An hour later Mr. Stenner sat in his humble lodgings at North Beach, with the pilfered garment upon his knees. He had already taken the opinion of an eminent pawnbroker on its value, and it only remained to search the pockets. Mr. Stenner's notions concerning

gentlemen's coats were not so clear as they might have been. Broadly stated, they were that these garments abounded in secret pockets crowded with a wealth of bank notes interspersed with gold coins. He was therefore disappointed when his careful quest was rewarded with only a delicately perfumed handkerchief, upon which he could not hope to obtain a loan of more than ten cents; a pair of gloves too small for use and a bit of paper that was not a cheque. A second look at this, however, inspired hope. It was about the size of a flounder, ruled in wide lines, and bore in conspicuous characters the words, "Western Union Telegraph Company." Immediately below this interesting legend was much other printed matter, the purport of which was that the company did not hold itself responsible for the verbal accuracy of "the following message," and did not consider itself either morally or legally bound to forward or deliver it, nor, in short, to render any kind of service for the money paid by the sender.

Unfamiliar with telegraphy, Mr. Stenner naturally supposed that a message subject to these hard conditions must be one of not only grave importance, but questionable character.

So he determined to decipher it at that time and place. In the course of the day he succeeded in so doing. It ran as follows, omitting the date and the names of persons and places, which were, of course, quite illegible:

"Buy Sally Meeker!"

Had the full force of this remarkable adjuration burst upon Mr. Stenner all at once it might have carried him away, which would not have been so bad a thing for San Francisco; but as the meaning had to percolate slowly through a dense dyke of ignorance, it produced no other immediate effect than the exclamation, "Well, I'll be bust!"

In the mouths of some persons this form of expression means a great deal. On the Stenner tongue it signified the hopeless nature of the Stenner mental confusion.

It must be confessed—by persons outside a certain limited and sordid circle—that the message lacks amplification and elaboration; in its terse, bald diction there is a ghastly suggestion of traffic in human flesh, for which in California there is no market since the abolition of slavery and the importation of thoroughbred beeves. If woman suffrage had been established all would have been clear; Mr. Stenner would at once have understood

the kind of purchase advised; for in political transactions he had very often changed hands himself. But it was all a muddle, and resolving to dismiss the matter from his thoughts, he went to bed thinking of nothing else; for many hours his excited imagination would do nothing but purchase slightly damaged Sally Meekers by the bale, and retail them to itself at an enormous profit.

Next day, it flashed upon his memory who Sally Meeker was—a racing mare! At this entirely obvious solution of the problem he was overcome with amazement at his own sagacity. Rushing into the street he purchased, not Sally Meeker, but a sporting paper—and in it found the notice of a race which was to come off the following week; and, sure enough, there it was:

"Budd Doble enters g. g. Clipper; Bob Scotty enters b. g. Lightnin'; Staley Tupper enters s. s. Upandust; Sim Salper enters b. m. Sally Meeker."

It was clear now; the sender of the dispatch was "in the know." Sally Meeker was to win, and her owner, who did not know it, had offered her for sale. At that supreme moment Mr. Stenner would willingly have been a rich man! In fact he resolved to be.

He at once betook him to Vallejo, where he had lived until invited away by some influential citizens of the place. There he immediately sought out an industrious friend who had an amiable weakness for draw poker, and in whom Mr. Stenner regularly encouraged that passion by going up against him every payday and despoiling him of his hard earnings. He did so this time, to the sum of one hundred dollars.

No sooner had he raked in his last pool and refused his friend's appeal for a trifling loan wherewith to pay for breakfast than he bought a check on the Bank of California, enclosed it in a letter containing merely the words "Bi Saly Meker," and dispatched it by mail to the only clergyman in San Francisco whose name he knew. Mr. Stenner had a vague notion that all kinds of business requiring strict honesty and fidelity might be profitably intrusted to the clergy; otherwise what was the use of religion? I hope I shall not be accused of disrespect to the cloth in thus bluntly setting forth Mr. Stenner's estimate of the parsons, inasmuch as I do not share it.

This business off his mind, Mr. Stenner unbent in a week's revelry; at the end of which he worked his passage down to San Fran-

cisco to secure his winnings on the race, and take charge of his peerless mare. It will be observed that his notions concerning races were somewhat confused; his experience of them had hitherto been confined to that branch of the business requiring, not technical knowledge but manual dexterity. In short, he had done no more than pick the pockets of the spectators. Arrived at San Francisco he was hastening to the dwelling of his clerical agent, when he met an acquaintance, to whom he put the triumphant question, "How about Sally Meeker?"

"Sally Meeker? Sally Meeker?" was the reply. "Oh, you mean the hoss? Why she's gone up the flume. Broke her neck the first heat. But ole Sim Salper is never a-goin' to fret hisself to a shadder about it. He struck it pizen in the mine she was named a'ter and the stock's gone up from nothin' out o' sight. You couldn't tech that stock with a ten-foot pole!"

Which was a blow to Mr. Stenner. He saw his error; the message in the coat had evidently been sent to a broker, and referred to the stock of the "Sally Meeker" mine. And he, Stenner, was a ruined man!

Suddenly a great, monstrous, misbegotten

and unmentionable oath rolled from Mr. Stenner's tongue like a cannon shot hurled along an uneven floor! Might it not be that the Rev. Mr. Boltright had also misunderstood the message, and had bought, not the mare, but the stock? The thought was electrical: Mr. Stenner ran—he flew! He tarried not at walls and the smaller sort of houses, but went through or over them! In five minutes he stood before the good clergyman —and in one more had asked, in a hoarse whisper, if he had bought any "Sally Meeker."

"My good friend," was the bland reply— "my fellow traveler to the bar of God, it would better comport with your spiritual needs to inquire what you should do to be saved. But since you ask me, I will confess that having received what I am compelled to regard as a Providential intimation, accompanied with the secular means of obedience, I did put up a small margin and purchase largely of the stock you mention. The venture, I am constrained to state, was not wholly unprofitable."

Unprofitable? The good man had made a square twenty-five thousand dollars on that small margin! To conclude—he has it yet.

MR. SWIDDLER'S FLIP-FLAP

JEROME BOWLES (said the gentleman called Swiddler) was to be hanged on Friday, the ninth of November, at five o'clock in the afternoon. This was to occur at the town of Flatbroke, where he was then in prison. Jerome was my friend, and naturally I differed with the jury that had convicted him as to the degree of guilt implied by the conceded fact that he had shot an Indian without direct provocation. Ever since his trial I had been endeavoring to influence the Governor of the State to grant a pardon; but public sentiment was against me, a fact which I attributed partly to the innate pigheadness of the people, and partly to the recent establishment of churches and schools which had corrupted the primitive notions of a frontier community. But I labored hard and unremittingly by all manner of direct and indirect means during the whole period in which Jerome lay under sentence of death; and on the very morning

of the day set for the execution, the Governor sent for me, and saying "he did not purpose being worried by my importunities all winter," handed me the document which he had so often refused.

Armed with the precious paper, I flew to the telegraph office to send a dispatch to the Sheriff at Flatbroke. I found the operator locking the door of the office and putting up the shutters. I pleaded in vain; he said he was going to see the hanging, and really had no time to send my message. I must explain that Flatbroke was fifteen miles away; I was then at Swan Creek, the State capital.

The operator being inexorable, I ran to the railroad station to see how soon there would be a train for Flatbroke. The station man, with cool and polite malice, informed me that all the employees of the road had been given a holiday to see Jerome Bowles hanged, and had already gone by an early train; that there would be no other train till the next day.

I was now furious, but the station man quietly turned me out, locking the gates. Dashing to the nearest livery stable, I ordered a horse. Why prolong the record of my disappointment? Not a horse could I get in that town; all had been engaged weeks before to

take people to the hanging. So everybody said, at least, though I now know there was a rascally conspiracy to defeat the ends of mercy, for the story of the pardon had got abroad.

It was now ten o'clock. I had only seven hours in which to do my fifteen miles afoot; but I was an excellent walker and thoroughly angry; there was no doubt of my ability to make the distance, with an hour to spare. The railway offered the best chance; it ran straight as a string across a level, treeless prairie, whereas the highway made a wide detour by way of another town.

I took to the track like a Modoc on the war path. Before I had gone a half-mile I was overtaken by "That Jim Peasley," as he was called in Swan Creek, an incurable practical joker, loved and shunned by all who knew him. He asked me as he came up if I were "going to the show." Thinking it was best to dissemble, I told him I was, but said nothing of my intention to stop the performance; I thought it would be a lesson to That Jim to let him walk fifteen miles for nothing, for it was clear that he was going, too. Still, I wished he would go on ahead or drop behind. But he could not very well do the former, and would not do the latter; so we trudged on together.

It was a cloudy day and very sultry for that time of the year. The railway stretched away before us, between its double row of telegraph poles, in rigid sameness, terminating in a point at the horizon. On either hand the disheartening monotony of the prairie was unbroken.

I thought little of these things, however, for my mental exaltation was proof against the depressing influence of the scene. I was about to save the life of my friend—to restore a crack shot to society. Indeed I scarcely thought of That Jim, whose heels were grinding the hard gravel close behind me, except when he saw fit occasionally to propound the sententious, and I thought derisive, query, "Tired?" Of course I was, but I would have died rather than confess it.

We had gone in this way, about half the distance, probably, in much less than half the seven hours, and I was getting my second wind, when That Jim again broke the silence.

"Used to bounce in a circus, didn't you?"

This was quite true! in a season of pecuniary depression I had once put my legs into my stomach—had turned my athletic accomplishments to financial advantage. It was not a pleasant topic, and I said nothing. That Jim persisted.

"Wouldn't like to do a feller a somersault now, eh?"

The mocking tongue of this jeer was intolerable; the fellow evidently considered me "done up," so taking a short run I clapped my hands to my thighs and executed as pretty a flip-flap as ever was made without a spring-board! At the moment I came erect with my head still spinning, I felt That Jim crowd past me, giving me a twirl that almost sent me off the track. A moment later he had dashed ahead at a tremendous pace, laughing derisively over his shoulder as if he had done a remarkably clever thing to gain the lead.

I was on the heels of him in less than ten minutes, though I must confess the fellow could walk amazingly. In half an hour I had run past him, and at the end of the hour, such was my slashing gait, he was a mere black dot in my rear, and appeared to be sitting on one of the rails, thoroughly used up.

Relieved of Mr. Peasley, I naturally began thinking of my poor friend in the Flatbroke jail, and it occurred to me that something might happen to hasten the execution. I knew the feeling of the country against him, and that many would be there from a distance who would naturally wish to get home before

nightfall. Nor could I help admitting to myself that five o'clock was an unreasonably late hour for a hanging. Tortured with these fears, I unconsciously increased my pace with every step, until it was almost a run. I stripped off my coat and flung it away, opened my collar, and unbuttoned my waistcoat. And at last, puffing and steaming like a locomotive engine, I burst into a thin crowd of idlers on the outskirts of the town, and flourished the pardon crazily above my head, yelling, "Cut him down!—cut him down!"

Then, as every one stared in blank amazement and nobody said anything, I found time to look about me, marveling at the oddly familiar appearance of the town. As I looked, the houses, streets, and everything seemed to undergo a sudden and mysterious transposition with reference to the points of the compass, as if swinging round on a pivot; and like one awakened from a dream I found myself among accustomed scenes. To be plain about it, I was back again in Swan Creek, as right as a trivet!

It was all the work of That Jim Peasley. The designing rascal had provoked me to throw a confusing somersault, then bumped against me, turning me half round, and started

on the back track, thereby inciting me to hook it in the same direction. The cloudy day, the two lines of telegraph poles, one on each side of the track, the entire sameness of the landscape to the right and left—these had all conspired to prevent my observing that I had put about.

When the excursion train returned from Flatbroke that evening the passengers were told a little story at my expense. It was just what they needed to cheer them up a bit after what they had seen; for that flip-flap of mine had broken the neck of Jerome Bowles seven miles away!

THE LITTLE STORY

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ—*A Supernumerary Editor. A Probationary Contributor.*

SCENE—*"The Expounder" Office.*

PROBATIONARY CONTRIBUTOR—Editor in?

SUPERNUMERARY EDITOR—Dead.

P. C.—The gods favor me. (*Produces roll of manuscript.*) Here is a little story, which I will read to you.

S. E.—O, O!

P. C.—(*Reads.*) "It was the last night of the year—a naughty, noxious, offensive night. In the principal street of San Francisco"——

S. E.—Confound San Francisco!

P. C.—It had to be somewhere. (*Reads.*)

"In the principal street of San Francisco stood a small female orphan, marking time like a volunteer. Her little bare feet imprinted cold kisses on the paving-stones as she put them down and drew them up alternately. The chilling rain was having a good time with her scalp, and toyed soppily with her hair—her

own hair. The night-wind shrewdly searched her tattered garments, as if it had suspected her of smuggling. She saw crowds of determined-looking persons grimly ruining themselves in toys and confectionery for the dear ones at home, and she wished she was in a position to ruin a little—just a little. Then, as the happy throng sped by her with loads of things to make the children sick, she leaned against an iron lamp-post in front of a bake-shop and turned on the wicked envy. She thought, poor thing, she would like to be a cake—for this little girl was very hungry indeed. Then she tried again, and thought she would like to be a tart with smashed fruit inside; then she would be warmed over every day and nobody would eat her. For the child was cold as well as hungry. Finally, she tried quite hard, and thought she could be very well content as an oven; for then she would be kept always hot, and bakers would put all manner of good things into her with a long shovel."

S. E.—I've read that somewhere.

P. C.—Very likely. This little story has never been rejected by any paper to which I have offered it. It gets better, too, every time I write it. When it first appeared in *Veracity* the editor said it cost him a hundred

subscribers. Just mark the improvement! (*Reads.*)

"The hours glided by—except a few that froze to the pavement—until midnight. The streets were now deserted, and the almanac having predicted a new moon about this time, the lamps had been conscientiously extinguished. Suddenly a great globe of sound fell from an adjacent church-tower, and exploded on the night with a deep metallic boom. Then all the clocks and bells began ringing-in the New Year—pounding and banging and yelling and finishing off all the nervous invalids left over from the preceding Sunday. The little orphan started from her dream, leaving a small patch of skin on the frosted lamp-post, clasped her thin blue hands and looked upward, 'with mad disquietude,' "—

S. E.—In *The Monitor* it was "with covetous eyes."

P. C.—I know it; hadn't read Byron then. Clever dog, Byron. (*Reads.*)

"Presently a cranberry tart dropped at her feet, apparently from the clouds."

S. E.—How about those angels?

P. C.—The editor of *Good Will* cut 'em out. He said San Francisco was no place for them; and I don't believe——

S. E.—There, there! Never mind. Go on with the little story.

P. C.—(*Reads.*) "As she stooped to take up the tart a veal sandwich came whizzing down, and cuffed one of her ears. Next a wheaten loaf made her dodge nimbly, and then a broad ham fell flat-footed at her toes. A sack of flour burst in the middle of the street; a side of bacon impaled itself on an iron hitching-post. Pretty soon a chain of sausages fell in a circle around her, flattening out as if a road-roller had passed over them. Then there was a lull—nothing came down but dried fish, cold puddings and flannel under-clothing; but presently her wishes began to take effect again, and a quarter of beef descended with terrific momentum upon the top of the little orphan's head."

S. E.—How did the editor of *The Reasonable Virtues* like that quarter of beef?

P. C.—Oh, he swallowed it like a little man, and stuck in a few dressed pigs of his own. I've left them out, because I don't want outsiders altering the Little Story. (*Reads.*)

"One would have thought that ought to suffice; but not so. Bedding, shoes, firkins of butter, mighty cheeses, ropes of onions, quantities of loose jam, kegs of oysters, titanic fowls,

crates of crockery and glassware, assorted house-keeping things, cooking ranges, and tons of coal poured down in broad cataracts from a bounteous heaven, piling themselves above that infant to a depth of twenty feet. The weather was more than two hours in clearing up; and as late as half-past three a ponderous hogshead of sugar struck at the corner of Clay and Kearney Streets, with an impact that shook the peninsula like an earthquake and stopped every clock in town.

"At daybreak the good merchants arrived upon the scene with shovels and wheelbarrows, and before the sun of the new year was an hour old, they had provided for all of these provisions—had stowed them away in their cellars, and nicely arranged them on their shelves, ready for sale to the deserving poor."

S. E.—And the little girl—what became of *her?*

P. C.—You musn't get ahead of the Little Story. (*Reads.*)

"When they had got down to the wicked little orphan who had not been content with her lot some one brought a broom, and she was carefully swept and smoothed out. Then they lifted her tenderly, and carried her to the coroner. That functionary was standing

in the door of his office, and with a deprecatory wave of his hand, he said to the man who was bearing her:

"'There, go away, my good fellow; there was a man here three times yesterday trying to sell me just such a map.'"

THE PARENTICIDE CLUB

MY FAVORITE MURDER

HAVING murdered my mother under circumstances of singular atrocity, I was arrested and put upon my trial, which lasted seven years. In charging the jury, the judge of the Court of Acquittal remarked that it was one of the most ghastly crimes that he had ever been called upon to explain away.

At this, my attorney rose and said:

"May it please your Honor, crimes are ghastly or agreeable only by comparison. If you were familiar with the details of my client's previous murder of his uncle you would discern in his later offense (if offense it may be called) something in the nature of tender forbearance and filial consideration for the feelings of the victim. The appalling ferocity of the former assassination was indeed inconsistent with any hypothesis but that of guilt; and had it not been for the fact that the honorable judge before whom he was tried was the president of a life insurance company

that took risks on hanging, and in which my client held a policy, it is hard to see how he could decently have been acquitted. If your Honor would like to hear about it for instruction and guidance of your Honor's mind, this unfortunate man, my client, will consent to give himself the pain of relating it under oath."

The district attorney said: "Your Honor, I object. Such a statement would be in the nature of evidence, and the testimony in this case is closed. The prisoner's statement should have been introduced three years ago, in the spring of 1881."

"In a statutory sense," said the judge, "you are right, and in the Court of Objections and Technicalities you would get a ruling in your favor. But not in a Court of Acquittal. The objection is overruled."

"I except," said the district attorney.

"You cannot do that," the judge said. "I must remind you that in order to take an exception you must first get this case transferred for a time to the Court of Exceptions on a formal motion duly supported by affidavits. A motion to that effect by your predecessor in office was denied by me during the first year of this trial. Mr. Clerk, swear the prisoner."

The customary oath having been administered, I made the following statement, which impressed the judge with so strong a sense of the comparative triviality of the offense for which I was on trial that he made no further search for mitigating circumstances, but simply instructed the jury to acquit, and I left the court, without a stain upon my reputation:

"I was born in 1856 in Kalamakee, Mich., of honest and reputable parents, one of whom Heaven has mercifully spared to comfort me in my later years. In 1867 the family came to California and settled near Nigger Head, where my father opened a road agency and prospered beyond the dreams of avarice. He was a reticent, saturnine man then, though his increasing years have now somewhat relaxed the austerity of his disposition, and I believe that nothing but his memory of the sad event for which I am now on trial prevents him from manifesting a genuine hilarity.

"Four years after we had set up the road agency an itinerant preacher came along, and having no other way to pay for the night's lodging that we gave him, favored us with an exhortation of such power that, praise God, we were all converted to religion. My father at once sent for his brother, the Hon. William

Ridley of Stockton, and on his arrival turned over the agency to him, charging him nothing for the franchise nor plant—the latter consisting of a Winchester rifle, a sawed-off shotgun, and an assortment of masks made out of flour sacks. The family then moved to Ghost Rock and opened a dance house. It was called 'The Saints' Rest Hurdy-Gurdy,' and the proceedings each night began with prayer. It was there that my now sainted mother, by her grace in the dance, acquired the *sobriquet* of 'The Bucking Walrus.'

"In the fall of '75 I had occasion to visit Coyote, on the road to Mahala, and took the stage at Ghost Rock. There were four other passengers. About three miles beyond Nigger Head, persons whom I identified as my Uncle William and his two sons held up the stage. Finding nothing in the express box, they went through the passengers. I acted a most honorable part in the affair, placing myself in line with the others, holding up my hands and permitting myself to be deprived of forty dollars and a gold watch. From my behavior no one could have suspected that I knew the gentlemen who gave the entertainment. A few days later, when I went to Nigger Head and asked for the return of my

money and watch my uncle and cousins swore they knew nothing of the matter, and they affected a belief that my father and I had done the job ourselves in dishonest violation of commercial good faith. Uncle William even threatened to retaliate by starting an opposition dance house at Ghost Rock. As 'The Saints' Rest' had become rather unpopular, I saw that this would assuredly ruin it and prove a paying enterprise, so I told my uncle that I was willing to overlook the past if he would take me into the scheme and keep the partnership a secret from my father. This fair offer he rejected, and I then perceived that it would be better and more satisfactory if he were dead.

"My plans to that end were soon perfected, and communicating them to my dear parents I had the gratification of receiving their approval. My father said he was proud of me, and my mother promised that although her religion forbade her to assist in taking human life I should have the advantage of her prayers for my success. As a preliminary measure looking to my security in case of detection I made an application for membership in that powerful order, the Knights of Murder, and in due course was received as a member of the

Ghost Rock commandery. On the day that my probation ended I was for the first time permitted to inspect the records of the order and learn who belonged to it—all the rites of initiation having been conducted in masks. Fancy my delight when, in looking over the roll of membership, I found the third name to be that of my uncle, who indeed was junior vice-chancellor of the order! Here was an opportunity exceeding my wildest dreams—to murder I could add insubordination and treachery. It was what my good mother would have called 'a special Providence.'

"At about this time something occurred which caused my cup of joy, already full, to overflow on all sides, a circular cataract of bliss. Three men, strangers in that locality, were arrested for the stage robbery in which I had lost my money and watch. They were brought to trial and, despite my efforts to clear them and fasten the guilt upon three of the most respectable and worthy citizens of Ghost Rock, convicted on the clearest proof. The murder would now be as wanton and reasonless as I could wish.

"One morning I shouldered my Winchester rifle, and going over to my uncle's house, near Nigger Head, asked my Aunt Mary, his wife,

if he were at home, adding that I had come to kill him. My aunt replied with her peculiar smile that so many gentleman called on that errand and were afterward carried away without having performed it that I must excuse her for doubting my good faith in the matter. She said I did not look as if I would kill anybody, so, as a proof of good faith I leveled my rifle and wounded a Chinaman who happened to be passing the house. She said she knew whole families that could do a thing of that kind, but Bill Ridley was a horse of another color. She said, however, that I would find him over on the other side of the creek in the sheep lot; and she added that she hoped the best man would win.

"My Aunt Mary was one of the most fair-minded women that I have ever met.

"I found my uncle down on his knees engaged in skinning a sheep. Seeing that he had neither gun nor pistol handy I had not the heart to shoot him, so I approached him, greeted him pleasantly and struck him a powerful blow on the head with the butt of my rifle. I have a very good delivery and Uncle William lay down on his side, then rolled over on his back, spread out his fingers and shivered. Before he could recover the use

of his limbs I seized the knife that he had been using and cut his hamstrings. You know, doubtless, that when you sever the *tendo Achillis* the patient has no further use of his leg; it is just the same as if he had no leg. Well, I parted them both, and when he revived he was at my service. As soon as he comprehended the situation, he said:

" 'Samuel, you have got the drop on me and can afford to be generous. I have only one thing to ask of you, and that is that you carry me to the house and finish me in the bosom of my family.'

"I told him I thought that a pretty reasonable request and I would do so if he would let me put him into a wheat sack; he would be easier to carry that way and if we were seen by the neighbors *en route* it would cause less remark. He agreed to that, and going to the barn I got a sack. This, however, did not fit him; it was too short and much wider than he; so I bent his legs, forced his knees up against his breast and got him into it that way, tying the sack above his head. He was a heavy man and I had all that I could do to get him on my back, but I staggered along for some distance until I came to a swing that some of the children had suspended to the branch of an

oak. Here I laid him down and sat upon him to rest, and the sight of the rope gave me a happy inspiration. In twenty minutes my uncle, still in the sack, swung free to the sport of the wind.

"I had taken down the rope, tied one end tightly about the mouth of the bag, thrown the other across the limb and hauled him up about five feet from the ground. Fastening the other end of the rope also about the mouth of the sack, I had the satisfaction to see my uncle converted into a large, fine pendulum. I must add that he was not himself entirely aware of the nature of the change that he had undergone in his relation to the exterior world, though in justice to a good man's memory I ought to say that I do not think he would in any case have wasted much of my time in vain remonstrance.

"Uncle William had a ram that was famous in all that region as a fighter. It was in a state of chronic constitutional indignation. Some deep disappointment in early life had soured its disposition and it had declared war upon the whole world. To say that it would butt anything accessible is but faintly to express the nature and scope of its military activity: the universe was its antagonist; its methods that

of a projectile. It fought like the angels and devils, in mid-air, cleaving the atmosphere like a bird, describing a parabolic curve and descending upon its victim at just the exact angle of incidence to make the most of its velocity and weight. Its momentum, calculated in foot-tons, was something incredible. It had been seen to destroy a four year old bull by a single impact upon that animal's gnarly forehead. No stone wall had ever been known to resist its downward swoop; there were no trees tough enough to stay it; it would splinter them into matchwood and defile their leafy honors in the dust. This irascible and implacable brute—this incarnate thunderbolt—this monster of the upper deep, I had seen reposing in the shade of an adjacent tree, dreaming dreams of conquest and glory. It was with a view to summoning it forth to the field of honor that I suspended its master in the manner described.

"Having completed my preparations, I imparted to the avuncular pendulum a gentle oscillation, and retiring to cover behind a contiguous rock, lifted up my voice in a long rasping cry whose diminishing final note was drowned in a noise like that of a swearing cat, which emanated from the sack. Instantly that

formidable sheep was upon its feet and had taken in the military situation at a glance. In a few moments it had approached, stamping, to within fifty yards of the swinging foeman, who, now retreating and anon advancing, seemed to invite the fray. Suddenly I saw the beast's head drop earthward as if depressed by the weight of its enormous horns; then a dim, white, wavy streak of sheep prolonged itself from that spot in a generally horizontal direction to within about four yards of a point immediately beneath the enemy. There it struck sharply upward, and before it had faded from my gaze at the place whence it had set out I heard a horrid thump and a piercing scream, and my poor uncle shot forward, with a slack rope higher than the limb to which he was attached. Here the rope tautened with a jerk, arresting his flight, and back he swung in a breathless curve to the other end of his arc. The ram had fallen, a heap of indistinguishable legs, wool and horns, but pulling itself together and dodging as its antagonist swept downward it retired at random, alternately shaking its head and stamping its fore-feet. When it had backed about the same distance as that from which it had delivered the assault it paused again,

bowed its head as if in prayer for victory and again shot forward, dimly visible as before—a prolonging white streak with monstrous undulations, ending with a sharp ascension. Its course this time was at a right angle to its former one, and its impatience so great that it struck the enemy before he had nearly reached the lowest point of his arc. In consequence he went flying round and round in a horizontal circle whose radius was about equal to half the length of the rope, which I forgot to say was nearly twenty feet long. His shrieks, *crescendo* in approach and *diminuendo* in recession, made the rapidity of his revolution more obvious to the ear than to the eye. He had evidently not yet been struck in a vital spot. His posture in the sack and the distance from the ground at which he hung compelled the ram to operate upon his lower extremities and the end of his back. Like a plant that has struck its root into some poisonous mineral, my poor uncle was dying slowly upward.

"After delivering its second blow the ram had not again retired. The fever of battle burned hot in its heart; its brain was intoxicated with the wine of strife. Like a pugilist who in his rage forgets his skill and fights

ineffectively at half-arm's length, the angry beast endeavored to reach its fleeting foe by awkward vertical leaps as he passed overhead, sometimes, indeed, succeeding in striking him feebly, but more frequently overthrown by its own misguided eagerness. But as the impetus was exhausted and the man's circles narrowed in scope and diminished in speed, bringing him nearer to the ground, these tactics produced better results, eliciting a superior quality of screams, which I greatly enjoyed.

"Suddenly, as if the bugles had sung truce, the ram suspended hostilities and walked away, thoughtfully wrinkling and smoothing its great aquiline nose, and occasionally cropping a bunch of grass and slowly munching it. It seemed to have tired of war's alarms and resolved to beat the sword into a plowshare and cultivate the arts of peace. Steadily it held its course away from the field of fame until it had gained a distance of nearly a quarter of a mile. There it stopped and stood with its rear to the foe, chewing its cud and apparently half asleep. I observed, however, an occasional slight turn of its head, as if its apathy were more affected than real.

"Meantime Uncle William's shrieks had

abated with his motion, and nothing was heard from him but long, low moans, and at long intervals my name, uttered in pleading tones exceedingly grateful to my ear. Evidently the man had not the faintest notion of what was being done to him, and was inexpressibly terrified. When Death comes cloaked in mystery he is terrible indeed. Little by little my uncle's oscillations diminished, and finally he hung motionless. I went to him and was about to give him the *coup de grâce*, when I heard and felt a succession of smart shocks which shook the ground like a series of light earthquakes, and turning in the direction of the ram, saw a long cloud of dust approaching me with inconceivable rapidity and alarming effect! At a distance of some thirty yards away it stopped short, and from the near end of it rose into the air what I at first thought a great white bird. Its ascent was so smooth and easy and regular that I could not realize its extraordinary celerity, and was lost in admiration of its grace. To this day the impression remains that it was a slow, deliberate movement, the ram—for it was that animal—being upborne by some power other than its own impetus, and supported through the successive stages of its

flight with infinite tenderness and care. My eyes followed its progress through the air with unspeakable pleasure, all the greater by contrast with my former terror of its approach by land. Onward and upward the noble animal sailed, its head bent down almost between its knees, its fore-feet thrown back, its hinder legs trailing to rear like the legs of a soaring heron.

"At a height of forty or fifty feet, as fond recollection presents it to view, it attained its zenith and appeared to remain an instant stationary; then, tilting suddenly forward without altering the relative position of its parts, it shot downward on a steeper and steeper course with augmenting velocity, passed immediately above me with a noise like the rush of a cannon shot and struck my poor uncle almost squarely on the top of the head! So frightful was the impact that not only the man's neck was broken, but the rope too; and the body of the deceased, forced against the earth, was crushed to pulp beneath the awful front of that meteoric sheep! The concussion stopped all the clocks between Lone Hand and Dutch Dan's, and Professor Davidson, a distinguished authority in matters seismic, who happened to be in the vicin-

ity, promptly explained that the vibrations were from north to southwest.

"Altogether, I cannot help thinking that in point of artistic atrocity my murder of Uncle William has seldom been excelled."

OIL OF DOG

MY name is Boffer Bings. I was born of honest parents in one of the humbler walks of life, my father being a manufacturer of dog-oil and my mother having a small studio in the shadow of the village church, where she disposed of unwelcome babes. In my boyhood I was trained to habits of industry; I not only assisted my father in procuring dogs for his vats, but was frequently employed by my mother to carry away the debris of her work in the studio. In performance of this duty I sometimes had need of all my natural intelligence for all the law officers of the vicinity were opposed to my mother's business. They were not elected on an opposition ticket, and the matter had never been made a political issue; it just happened so. My father's business of making dog-oil was, naturally, less unpopular, though the owners of missing dogs sometimes regarded him with suspicion, which was reflected, to some extent, upon me. My

father had, as silent partners, all the physicians of the town, who seldom wrote a prescription which did not contain what they were pleased to designate as *Ol. can.* It is really the most valuable medicine ever discovered. But most persons are unwilling to make personal sacrifices for the afflicted, and it was evident that many of the fattest dogs in town had been forbidden to play with me—a fact which pained my young sensibilities, and at one time came near driving me to become a pirate.

Looking back upon those days, I cannot but regret, at times, that by indirectly bringing my beloved parents to their death I was the author of misfortunes profoundly affecting my future.

One evening while passing my father's oil factory with the body of a foundling from my mother's studio I saw a constable who seemed to be closely watching my movements. Young as I was, I had learned that a constable's acts, of whatever apparent character, are prompted by the most reprehensible motives, and I avoided him by dodging into the oilery by a side door which happened to stand ajar. I locked it at once and was alone with my dead. My father had retired for the night. The

only light in the place came from the furnace, which glowed a deep, rich crimson under one of the vats, casting ruddy reflections on the walls. Within the cauldron the oil still rolled in indolent ebullition, occasionally pushing to the surface a piece of dog. Seating myself to wait for the constable to go away, I held the naked body of the foundling in my lap and tenderly stroked its short, silken hair. Ah, how beautiful it was! Even at that early age I was passionately fond of children, and as I looked upon this cherub I could almost find it in my heart to wish that the small, red wound upon its breast—the work of my dear mother—had not been mortal.

It had been my custom to throw the babes into the river which nature had thoughtfully provided for the purpose, but that night I did not dare to leave the oilery for fear of the constable. "After all," I said to myself, "it cannot greatly matter if I put it into this cauldron. My father will never know the bones from those of a puppy, and the few deaths which may result from administering another kind of oil for the incomparable *ol. can.* are not important in a population which increases so rapidly." In short, I took the first step in crime and brought myself untold

sorrow by casting the babe into the cauldron.

The next day, somewhat to my surprise, my father, rubbing his hands with satisfaction, informed me and my mother that he had obtained the finest quality of oil that was ever seen; that the physicians to whom he had shown samples had so pronounced it. He added that he had no knowledge as to how the result was obtained; the dogs had been treated in all respects as usual, and were of an ordinary breed. I deemed it my duty to explain—which I did, though palsied would have been my tongue if I could have foreseen the consequences. Bewailing their previous ignorance of the advantages of combining their industries, my parents at once took measures to repair the error. My mother removed her studio to a wing of the factory building and my duties in connection with the business ceased; I was no longer required to dispose of the bodies of the small superfluous, and there was no need of alluring dogs to their doom, for my father discarded them altogether, though they still had an honorable place in the name of the oil. So suddenly thrown into idleness, I might naturally have been expected to become vicious and dissolute, but I did not. The holy influence of my dear mother

was ever about me to protect me from the temptations which beset youth, and my father was a deacon in a church. Alas, that through my fault these estimable persons should have come to so bad an end!

Finding a double profit in her business, my mother now devoted herself to it with a new assiduity. She removed not only superfluous and unwelcome babes to order, but went out into the highways and byways, gathering in children of a larger growth, and even such adults as she could entice to the oilery. My father, too, enamored of the superior quality of oil produced, purveyed for his vats with diligence and zeal. The conversion of their neighbors into dog-oil became, in short, the one passion of their lives—an absorbing and overwhelming greed took possession of their souls and served them in place of a hope in Heaven—by which, also, they were inspired.

So enterprising had they now become that a public meeting was held and resolutions passed severely censuring them. It was intimated by the chairman that any further raids upon the population would be met in a spirit of hostility. My poor parents left the meeting broken-hearted, desperate and, I believe, not altogether sane. Anyhow, I deemed

it prudent not to enter the oilery with them that night, but slept outside in a stable.

At about midnight some mysterious impulse caused me to rise and peer through a window into the furnace-room, where I knew my father now slept. The fires were burning as brightly as if the following day's harvest had been expected to be abundant. One of the large cauldrons was slowly "walloping" with a mysterious appearance of self-restraint, as if it bided its time to put forth its full energy. My father was not in bed; he had risen in his nightclothes and was preparing a noose in a strong cord. From the looks which he cast at the door of my mother's bedroom I knew too well the purpose that he had in mind. Speechless and motionless with terror, I could do nothing in prevention or warning. Suddenly the door of my mother's apartment was opened, noiselessly, and the two confronted each other, both apparently surprised. The lady, also, was in her night clothes, and she held in her right hand the tool of her trade, a long, narrow-bladed dagger.

She, too, had been unable to deny herself the last profit which the unfriendly action of the citizens and my absence had left her.

For one instant they looked into each other's blazing eyes and then sprang together with indescribable fury. Round and round the room they struggled, the man cursing, the woman shrieking, both fighting like demons—she to strike him with the dagger, he to strangle her with his great bare hands. I know not how long I had the unhappiness to observe this disagreeable instance of domestic infelicity, but at last, after a more than usually vigorous struggle, the combatants suddenly moved apart.

My father's breast and my mother's weapon showed evidences of contact. For another instant they glared at each other in the most unamiable way; then my poor, wounded father, feeling the hand of death upon him, leaped forward, unmindful of resistance, grasped my dear mother in his arms, dragged her to the side of the boiling cauldron, collected all his failing energies, and sprang in with her! In a moment, both had disappeared and were adding their oil to that of the committee of citizens who had called the day before with an invitation to the public meeting.

Convinced that these unhappy events closed to me every avenue to an honorable career in

that town, I removed to the famous city of Otumwee, where these memoirs are written with a heart full of remorse for a heedless act entailing so dismal a commercial disaster.

AN IMPERFECT CONFLAGRATION

EARLY one June morning in 1872 I murdered my father—an act which made a deep impression on me at the time. This was before my marriage, while I was living with my parents in Wisconsin. My father and I were in the library of our home, dividing the proceeds of a burglary which we had committed that night. These consisted of household goods mostly, and the task of equitable division was difficult. We got on very well with the napkins, towels and such things, and the silverware was parted pretty nearly equally, but you can see for yourself that when you try to divide a single music-box by two without a remainder you will have trouble. It was that music-box which brought disaster and disgrace upon our family. If we had left it my poor father might now be alive.

It was a most exquisite and beautiful piece of workmanship—inlaid with costly woods and carven very curiously. It would not only

play a great variety of tunes, but would whistle like a quail, bark like a dog, crow every morning at daylight whether it was wound up or not, and break the Ten Commandments. It was this last mentioned accomplishment that won my father's heart and caused him to commit the only dishonorable act of his life, though possibly he would have committed more if he had been spared: he tried to conceal that music-box from me, and declared upon his honor that he had not taken it, though I knew very well that, so far as he was concerned, the burglary had been undertaken chiefly for the purpose of obtaining it.

My father had the music-box hidden under his cloak; we had worn cloaks by way of disguise. He had solemnly assured me that he did not take it. I knew that he did, and knew something of which he was evidently ignorant; namely, that the box would crow at daylight and betray him if I could prolong the division of profits till that time. All occurred as I wished: as the gaslight began to pale in the library and the shape of the windows was seen dimly behind the curtains, a long cock-a-doodle-doo came from beneath the old gentleman's cloak, followed by a few bars of an aria from *Tannhauser,* ending with a loud click.

A small hand-axe, which we had used to break into the unlucky house, lay between us on the table; I picked it up. The old man seeing that further concealment was useless took the box from under his cloak and set it on the table. "Cut it in two if you prefer that plan," said he; "I tried to save it from destruction."

He was a passionate lover of music and could himself play the concertina with expression and feeling.

I said: "I do not question the purity of your motive: it would be presumptuous in me to sit in judgment on my father. But business is business, and with this axe I am going to effect a dissolution of our partnership unless you will consent in all future burglaries to wear a bell-punch."

"No," he said, after some reflection, "no, I could not do that; it would look like a confession of dishonesty. People would say that you distrusted me."

I could not help admiring his spirit and sensitiveness; for a moment I was proud of him and disposed to overlook his fault, but a glance at the richly jeweled music-box decided me, and, as I said, I removed the old man from this vale of tears. Having done so, I was a trifle uneasy. Not only was he my

father—the author of my being—but the body would be certainly discovered. It was now broad daylight and my mother was likely to enter the library at any moment. Under the circumstances, I thought it expedient to remove her also, which I did. Then I paid off all the servants and discharged them.

That afternoon I went to the chief of police, told him what I had done and asked his advice. It would be very painful to me if the facts became publicly known. My conduct would be generally condemned; the newspapers would bring it up against me if ever I should run for office. The chief saw the force of these considerations; he was himself an assassin of wide experience. After consulting with the presiding judge of the Court of Variable Jurisdiction he advised me to conceal the bodies in one of the bookcases, get a heavy insurance on the house and burn it down. This I proceeded to do.

In the library was a book-case which my father had recently purchased of some cranky inventor and had not filled. It was in shape and size something like the old-fashioned "wardrobes" which one sees in bed-rooms without closets, but opened all the way down, like a woman's night-dress. It had glass doors. I

had recently laid out my parents and they were now rigid enough to stand erect; so I stood them in this book-case, from which I had removed the shelves. I locked them in and tacked some curtains over the glass doors. The inspector from the insurance office passed a half-dozen times before the case without suspicion.

That night, after getting my policy, I set fire to the house and started through the woods to town, two miles away, where I managed to be found about the time the excitement was at its height. With cries of apprehension for the fate of my parents, I joined the rush and arrived at the fire some two hours after I had kindled it. The whole town was there as I dashed up. The house was entirely consumed, but in one end of the level bed of glowing embers, bolt upright and uninjured, was that book-case! The curtains had burned away, exposing the glass-doors, through which the fierce, red light illuminated the interior. There stood my dear father "in his habit as he lived," and at his side the partner of his joys and sorrows. Not a hair of them was singed, their clothing was intact. On their heads and throats the injuries which in the accomplishment of my designs I had been

compelled to inflict were conspicuous. As in the presence of a miracle, the people were silent; awe and terror had stilled every tongue. I was myself greatly affected.

Some three years later, when the events herein related had nearly faded from my memory, I went to New York to assist in passing some counterfeit United States bonds. Carelessly looking into a furniture store one day, I saw the exact counterpart of that book-case. "I bought it for a trifle from a reformed inventor," the dealer explained. "He said it was fireproof, the pores of the wood being filled with alum under hydraulic pressure and the glass made of asbestos. I don't suppose it is really fireproof—you can have it at the price of an ordinary book-case."

"No," I said, "if you cannot warrant it fireproof I won't take it"—and I bade him good morning.

I would not have had it at any price: it revived memories that were exceedingly disagreeable.

THE HYPNOTIST

BY those of my friends who happen to know that I sometimes amuse myself with hypnotism, mind reading and kindred phenomena, I am frequently asked if I have a clear conception of the nature of whatever principle underlies them. To this question I always reply that I neither have nor desire to have. I am no investigator with an ear at the key-hole of Nature's workshop, trying with vulgar curiosity to steal the secrets of her trade. The interests of science are as little to me as mine seem to have been to science.

Doubtless the phenomena in question are simple enough, and in no way transcend our powers of comprehension if only we could find the clew; but for my part I prefer not to find it, for I am of a singularly romantic disposition, deriving more gratification from mystery than from knowledge. It was commonly remarked of me when I was a child that my big blue eyes appeared to have been made rather to look into than look out of—

such was their dreamful beauty, and in my frequent periods of abstraction, their indifference to what was going on. In those peculiarities they resembled, I venture to think, the soul which lies behind them, always more intent upon some lovely conception which it has created in its own image than concerned about the laws of nature and the material frame of things. All this, irrelevant and egotistic as it may seem, is related by way of accounting for the meagreness of the light that I am able to throw upon a subject that has engaged so much of my attention, and concerning which there is so keen and general a curiosity. With my powers and opportunities, another person might doubtless have an explanation for much of what I present simply as narrative.

My first knowledge that I possessed unusual powers came to me in my fourteenth year, when at school. Happening one day to have forgotten to bring my noon-day luncheon, I gazed longingly at that of a small girl who was preparing to eat hers. Looking up, her eyes met mine and she seemed unable to withdraw them. After a moment of hesitancy she came forward in an absent kind of way and without a word surrendered her little basket

with its tempting contents and walked away. Inexpressibly pleased, I relieved my hunger and destroyed the basket. After that I had not the trouble to bring a luncheon for myself: that little girl was my daily purveyor; and not infrequently in satisfying my simple need from her frugal store I combined pleasure and profit by constraining her attendance at the feast and making misleading proffer of the viands, which eventually I consumed to the last fragment. The girl was always persuaded that she had eaten all herself; and later in the day her tearful complaints of hunger surprised the teacher, entertained the pupils, earned for her the sobriquet of Greedy-Gut and filled me with a peace past understanding.

A disagreeable feature of this otherwise satisfactory condition of things was the necessary secrecy: the transfer of the luncheon, for example, had to be made at some distance from the madding crowd, in a wood; and I blush to think of the many other unworthy subterfuges entailed by the situation. As I was (and am) naturally of a frank and open disposition, these became more and more irksome, and but for the reluctance of my parents to renounce the obvious advantages of the

new *régime* I would gladly have reverted to the old. The plan that I finally adopted to free myself from the consequences of my own powers excited a wide and keen interest at the time, and that part of it which consisted in the death of the girl was severely condemned, but it is hardly pertinent to the scope of this narrative.

For some years afterward I had little opportunity to practice hypnotism; such small essays as I made at it were commonly barren of other recognition than solitary confinement on a bread-and-water diet; sometimes, indeed, they elicited nothing better than the cat-o'-nine-tails. It was when I was about to leave the scene of these small disappointments that my one really important feat was performed.

I had been called into the warden's office and given a suit of civilian's clothing, a trifling sum of money and a great deal of advice, which I am bound to confess was of a much better quality than the clothing. As I was passing out of the gate into the light of freedom I suddenly turned and looking the warden gravely in the eye, soon had him in control.

"You are an ostrich," I said.

At the post-mortem examination the stomach was found to contain a great quantity

of indigestible articles mostly of wood or metal. Stuck fast in the œsophagus and constituting, according to the Coroner's jury, the immediate cause of death, one door-knob.

I was by nature a good and affectionate son, but as I took my way into the great world from which I had been so long secluded I could not help remembering that all my misfortunes had flowed like a stream from the niggard economy of my parents in the matter of school luncheons; and I knew of no reason to think they had reformed.

On the road between Succotash Hill and South Asphyxia is a little open field which once contained a shanty known as Pete Gilstrap's Place, where that gentleman used to murder travelers for a living. The death of Mr. Gilstrap and the diversion of nearly all the travel to another road occurred so nearly at the same time that no one has ever been able to say which was cause and which effect. Anyhow, the field was now a desolation and the Place had long been burned. It was while going afoot to South Asphyxia, the home of my childhood, that I found both my parents on their way to the Hill. They had hitched their team and were eating luncheon under an oak tree in the center of the field. The sight of the

luncheon called up painful memories of my school days and roused the sleeping lion in my breast. Approaching the guilty couple, who at once recognized me, I ventured to suggest that I share their hospitality.

"Of this cheer, my son," said the author of my being, with characteristic pomposity, which age had not withered, "there is sufficient for but two. I am not, I hope, insensible to the hunger-light in your eyes, but—"

My father has never completed that sentence; what he mistook for hunger-light was simply the earnest gaze of the hypnotist. In a few seconds he was at my service. A few more sufficed for the lady, and the dictates of a just resentment could be carried into effect. "My former father," I said, "I presume that it is known to you that you and this lady are no longer what you were?"

"I have observed a certain subtle change," was the rather dubious reply of the old gentleman; "it is perhaps attributable to age."

"It is more than that," I explained; "it goes to character—to species. You and the lady here are, in truth, two *broncos*—wild stallions both, and unfriendly."

"Why, John," exclaimed my dear mother, "you don't mean to say that I am—"

"Madam," I replied, solemnly, fixing my eyes again upon hers, "you are."

Scarcely had the words fallen from my lips when she dropped upon her hands and knees, and backing up to the old man squealed like a demon and delivered a vicious kick upon his shin! An instant later he was himself down on all-fours, headed away from her and flinging his feet at her simultaneously and successively. With equal earnestness but inferior agility, because of her hampering body-gear, she plied her own. Their flying legs crossed and mingled in the most bewildering way; their feet sometimes meeting squarely in midair, their bodies thrust forward, falling flat upon the ground and for a moment helpless. On recovering themselves they would resume the combat, uttering their frenzy in the nameless sounds of the furious brutes which they believed themselves to be—the whole region rang with their clamor! Round and round they wheeled, the blows of their feet falling "like lightnings from the mountain cloud." They plunged and reared backward upon their knees, struck savagely at each other with awkward descending blows of both fists at once, and dropped again upon their hands as if unable to maintain the upright

position of the body. Grass and pebbles were torn from the soil by hands and feet; clothing, hair, faces inexpressibly defiled with dust and blood. Wild, inarticulate screams of rage attested the delivery of the blows; groans, grunts and gasps their receipt. Nothing more truly military was ever seen at Gettysburg or Waterloo: the valor of my dear parents in the hour of danger can never cease to be to me a source of pride and gratification. At the end of it all two battered, tattered, bloody and fragmentary vestiges of mortality attested the solemn fact that the author of the strife was an orphan.

Arrested for provoking a breach of the peace, I was, and have ever since been, tried in the Court of Technicalities and Continuances whence, after fifteen years of proceedings, my attorney is moving heaven and earth to get the case taken to the Court of Remandment for New Trials.

Such are a few of my principal experiments in the mysterious force or agency known as hypnotic suggestion. Whether or not it could be employed by a bad man for an unworthy purpose I am unable to say.

THE FOURTH ESTATE

MR. MASTHEAD, JOURNALIST

WHILE I was in Kansas I purchased a weekly newspaper—the *Claybank Thundergust of Reform.* This paper had never paid its expenses; it had ruined four consecutive publishers; but my brother-in-law, Mr. Jefferson Scandril, of Weedhaven, was going to run for the Legislature, and I naturally desired his defeat; so it became necessary to have an organ in Claybank to assist in his political extinction. When the establishment came into my hands, the editor was a fellow who had "opinions," and him I at once discharged with an admonition. I had some difficulty in procuring a successor; every man in the county applied for the place. I could not appoint one without having to fight a majority of the others, and was eventually compelled to write to a friend at Warm Springs, in the adjoining State of Missouri, to send me an editor from abroad whose instalment at the helm of manifest destiny could have no local significance.

The man he sent me was a frowsy, seedy fel-

low, named Masthead—not larger, apparently, than a boy of sixteen years, though it was difficult to say from the outside how much of him was editor and how much cast-off clothing; for in the matter of apparel he had acted upon his favorite professional maxim, and "sunk the individual;" his attire—eminently eclectic, and in a sense international—quite overcame him at all points. However, as my friend had assured me he was "a graduate of one of the largest institutions in his native State," I took him in and bought a pen for him. My instructions to him were brief and simple.

"Mr. Masthead," said I, "it is the policy of the *Thundergust* first, last, and all the time, in this world and the next, to resent the intrusion of Mr. Jefferson Scandril into politics."

The first thing the little rascal did was to write a withering leader denouncing Mr. Scandril as a "demagogue, the degradation of whose political opinions was only equaled by the disgustfulness of the family connections of which those opinions were the spawn!"

I hastened to point out to Mr. Masthead that it had never been the policy of the *Thundergust* to attack the family relations of an offensive candidate, although this was not strictly true.

"I am very sorry," he replied, running his head up out of his clothes till it towered as much as six inches above the table at which he sat; "no offense, I hope."

"Oh, none in the world," said I, as carelessly as I could manage it; "only I don't think it a legitimate—that is, an effective, method of attack."

"Mr. Johnson," said he—I was passing as Johnson at that time, I remember—"Mr. Johnson, I think it *is* an effective method. Personally I might perhaps prefer another line of argument in this particular case, and personally perhaps you might; but in our profession personal considerations must be blown to the winds of the horizon; we must sink the individual. In opposing the election of your relative, sir, you have set the seal of your heavy displeasure upon the sin of nepotism, and for this I respect you; nepotism must be got under! But in the display of Roman virtues, sir, we must go the whole hog. When in the interest of public morality"—Mr. Masthead was now gesticulating earnestly with the sleeves of his coat—"Virginius stabbed his daughter, was he influenced by personal considerations? When Curtius leaped into the yawning gulf, did he not sink the individual?"

I admitted that he did, but feeling in a contentious mood, prolonged the discussion by leisurely loading and capping a revolver; but, prescient of my argument, Mr. Masthead avoided refutation by hastily adjourning the debate. I sent him a note that evening, filling-in a few of the details of the policy that I had before sketched in outline. Amongst other things I submitted that it would be better for us to exalt Mr. Scandril's opponent than to degrade himself. To this Mr. Masthead reluctantly assented—"sinking the individual," he reproachfully explained, "in the dependent employee—the powerless bondsman!" The next issue of the *Thundergust* contained, under the heading, "Invigorating Zephyrs," the following editorial article:

"Last week we declared our unalterable opposition to the candidacy of Mr. Jefferson Scandril, and gave reasons for the faith that is in us. For the first time in its history this paper made a clear, thoughtful, and adequate avowal and exposition of eternal principle! Abandoning for the present the stand we then took, let us trace the antecedents of Mr. Scandril's opponent up to their source. It has been urged against Mr. Broskin that he spent some years of his life in the lunatic asylum at Warm

Springs, in the adjoining commonwealth of Missouri. This cuckoo cry—raised though it is by dogs of political darkness—we shall not stoop to controvert, for it is accidentally true; but next week we shall show, as by the stroke of an enchanter's wand, that this great statesman's detractors would probably not derive any benefits from a residence in the same institution, their mental aberration being rottenly incurable!"

I thought this rather strong and not quite to the point; but Masthead said it was a fact that our candidate, who was very little known in Claybank, had "served a term" in the Warm Springs asylum, and the issue must be boldly met—that evasion and denial were but forms of prostration beneath the iron wheels of Truth! As he said this he seemed to inflate and expand so as almost to fill his clothes, and the fire of his eye somehow burned into me an impression—since effaced—that a just cause is not imperiled by a trifling concession to fact. So, leaving the matter quite in my editor's hands I went away to keep some important engagements, the paragraph having involved me in several duels with the friends of Mr. Broskin. I thought it rather hard that I should have to defend my new editor's policy against

the supporters of my own candidate, particularly as I was clearly in the right and they knew nothing whatever about the matter in dispute, not one of them having ever before so much as heard of the now famous Warm Springs asylum. But I would not shirk even the humblest journalistic duty; I fought these fellows and acquitted myself as became a man of letters and a politician. The hurts I got were some time healing, and in the interval every prominent member of my party who came to Claybank to speak to the people regarded it as a simple duty to call first at my house, make a tender inquiry as to the progress of my recovery and leave a challenge. My physician forbade me to read a line of anything; the consequence was that Masthead had it all his own way with the paper. In looking over the old files now, I find that he devoted his entire talent and all the space of the paper, including what had been the advertising columns, to confessing that our candidate had been an inmate of a lunatic asylum, and contemptuously asking the opposing party what they were going to do about it.

All this time Mr. Broskin made no sign; but when the challenges became intolerable I indignantly instructed Mr. Masthead to

whip round to the other side and support my brother-in-law. Masthead "sank the individual," and duly announced, with his accustomed frankness, our change of policy. Then Mr. Broskin came down to Claybank—to thank me! He was a fine, respectable-looking gentleman, and impressed me very favorably. But Masthead was in when he called, and the effect upon *him* was different. He shrank into a mere heap of old clothes, turned white, and chattered his teeth. Noting this extraordinary behavior, I at once sought an explanation.

"Mr. Broskin," said I, with a meaning glance at the trembling editor, "from certain indications I am led to fear that owing to some mistake we may have been doing you an injustice. May I ask you if you were really ever in the Lunatic asylum at Warm Springs, Missouri?"

"For three years," he replied, quietly, "I was the physician in charge of that institution. Your son"—turning to Masthead, who was flying all sorts of colors—"was, if I mistake not, one of my patients. I learn that a few weeks ago a friend of yours, named Norton, secured the young man's release upon your promise to take care of him yourself in future.

I hope that home associations have improved the poor fellow. It's very sad!"

It was indeed. Norton was the name of the man to whom I had written for an editor, and who had sent me one! Norton was ever an obliging fellow.

WHY I AM NOT EDITING "THE STINGER"

J. Munniglut, Proprietor, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

"STINGER" OFFICE, Monday, 9 A. M.

A MAN has called to ask "who wrote that article about Mr. Muskler." I told him to find out, and he says that is what he means to do. He has consented to amuse himself with the exchanges while I ask you. I don't approve the article.

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to J. Munniglut, Proprietor.

13 LOFER STREET, Monday, 10 A. M.

Do you happen to remember how Dacier translates *Difficile est proprie communia dicere?* I've made a note of it somewhere, but can't find it. If you remember please leave a memorandum of it on your table, and I'll get it when I come down this afternoon.

P.S.—Tell the man to go away; we can't be bothered about that fellow Muskler.

J. Munniglut, Proprietor, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

"STINGER" OFFICE, Monday, 11:30 A. M.

I can't be impolite to a stranger, you know; I must tell him *somebody* wrote it. He has finished the exchanges, and is drumming on the floor with the end of his stick; I fear the people in the shop below won't like it. Besides, the foreman says it disturbs the compositors in the next room. Suppose you come down.

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to J. Munniglut, Proprietor.

13 LOFER STREET, Monday, 1 P. M.

I have found the note I made of that translation, but it is in French and I can't make it out. Try the man with the dictionary and the "Books of Dates." They ought to last him till it's time to close the office. I shall be down early to-morrow morning.

P.S.—How big is he? Suggest a civil suit for libel.

J. Munniglut, Proprietor, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

"STINGER" OFFICE, Monday, 3 P. M.

He looks larger than he was when he came in. I've offered him the dictionary; he says he has read it before. He is sitting on my table. Come at once!

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to J. Munniglut, Proprietor.

13 LOFER STREET, Monday, 5 P. M.

I don't think I shall. I am doing an article for this week on "The Present Aspect of the Political Horizon." Expect me *very* early to-morrow. You had better turn the man out and shut up the office.

Henry Inxling, Bookkeeper, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

"STINGER" OFFICE, Tuesday, 8 A. M.

Mr. Munniglut has not arrived, but his friend, the large gentleman who was with him all day yesterday, is here again. He seems

very desirous of seeing you, and says he will wait. Perhaps he is your cousin. I thought I would tell you he was here, so that you might hasten down.

Ought I to allow dogs in the office? The gentleman has a bull-dog.

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to Henry Inxling, Bookkeeper.

13 LOFER STREET, Tuesday, 9.30 A. M.

Certainly *not;* dogs have fleas. The man is an impostor. Oblige me by turning him out. I shall come down this afternoon—*early.*

P.S.—Don't listen to the rascal's entreaties; out with him!

Henry Inxling, Bookkeeper, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

"STINGER" OFFICE, Tuesday, 12 M.

The gentleman carries a revolver. Would you mind coming down and reasoning with him? I have a wife and five children depending on me, and when I lose my temper I am likely to go too far. I would prefer that *you* should turn him out.

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to Henry Inxling, Bookkeeper.

13 LOFER STREET, Tuesday, 2 P. M.

Do you suppose I can leave my private correspondence to preserve you from the intrusion and importunities of beggars? Put the scoundrel out at once—neck and heels! I know him; he's Muskler—don't you remember? Muskler, the coward, who assaulted an old man; you'll find the whole circumstances related in last Saturday's issue. Out with him —the unmanly sneak!

Henry Inxling, Bookkeeper, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

"STINGER" OFFICE, Tuesday Evening.

I have told him to go, and he laughed. So did the bull-dog. But he is going. He is now making a bed for the pup in one corner of your room, with some rugs and old newspapers, and appears to be about to go to dinner. I have given him your address. The foreman wants some copy to go on with. I beg you will come at once if I am to be left alone with that dog.

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to Henry Inxling, Bookkeeper.

40 DUNTIONER'S ALLEY, Wednesday, 10 A. M.

I should have come down to the office last evening, but you see I have been moving. My landlady was too filthy dirty for anything! I stood it as long as I could; then I left. I'm coming directly I get your answer to this; but I want to know, first, if my blotter has been changed and my ink-well refilled. This house is a good way out, but the boy can take the car at the corner of Cobble and Slush streets.

O!—about that *man?* Of course you have not seen him since.

William Quoin, Foreman, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

"STINGER" OFFICE, Wednesday, 12 M.

I've got your note to Inxling; he ain't come down this morning. I haven't a line of copy on the hooks; the boys are all throwing in dead ads. There's a man and a dog in the proprietor's office; I don't believe they ought to be there, all alone, but they were here all

Monday and yesterday, and may be connected with the business management of the paper; so I don't like to order them out. Perhaps you will come down and speak to them. We shall have to go away if you don't send copy.

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to William Quoin, Foreman.

40 DUNTIONER'S ALLEY, Wednesday, 3 P. M.

Your note astonishes me. The man you describe is a notorious thief. Get the compositors all together, and make a rush at him. Don't try to keep him, but hustle him out of town, and I'll be down as soon as I can get a button sewn on my collar.

P.S.—Give it him good!—don't mention my address and he can't complain to me how you treat him. Bust his bugle!

J. Munniglut, Proprietor, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

"STINGER" OFFICE, Friday, 2 P. M.

Business has detained me from the office until now, and what do I find? Not a soul

about the place, no copy, not a stickful of live matter on the galleys! There can be no paper this week. What you have all done with yourselves I am sure I don't know; one would suppose there had been smallpox about the place. You will please come down and explain this Hegira at once—at once, if *you* please!

P.S.—That troublesome Muskler—you may remember he dropped in on Monday to inquire about something or other—has taken a sort of shop exactly opposite here, and seems, at this distance, to be doing something to a shotgun. I presume he is a gunsmith. So we are precious well rid of *him*.

Peter Pitchin, Editor to J. Munniglut, Proprietor.

PIER NO. 3, Friday Evening.

Just a line or two to say I am suddenly called away to bury my sick mother. When that is off my mind I'll write you what I know about the Hegira, the Flight into Egypt, the Retreat of the Ten Thousand, and whatever else you would like to learn. There is nothing mean about *me!* I don't think there has been any

wilful desertion. You may engage an editor for, say, fifty years, with the privilege of keeping him regularly, if, at the end of that time, I should break my neck hastening back.

P.S.—I hope that poor fellow Muskler will make a fair profit in the gunsmithing line. Jump him for an ad!

CORRUPTING THE PRESS

WHEN Joel Bird was up for Governor of Missouri, Sam Henly was editing the Berrywood *Bugle;* and no sooner was the nomination made by the State Convention than he came out hot against the party. He was an able writer, was Sam, and the lies he invented about our candidate were shocking! That, however, we endured very well, but presently Sam turned squarely about and began telling the truth. *This* was a little too much; the County Committee held a hasty meeting, and decided that it must be stopped; so I, Henry Barber, was sent for to make arrangements to that end. I knew something of Sam: had purchased him several times, and I estimated his present value at about one thousand dollars. This seemed to the committee a reasonable figure, and on my mentioning it to Sam he said "he thought that about the fair thing; it should never be said that the *Bugle* was a hard paper to deal with." There was, how-

ever, some delay in raising the money; the candidates for the local offices had not disposed of their autumn hogs yet, and were in financial straits. Some of them contributed a pig each, one gave twenty bushels of corn, another a flock of chickens; and the man who aspired to the distinction of County Judge paid his assessment with a wagon. These things had to be converted into cash at a ruinous sacrifice, and in the meantime Sam kept pouring an incessant stream of hot shot into our political camp. Nothing I could say would make him stay his hand; he invariably replied that it was no bargain until he had the money. The committeemen were furious; it required all my eloquence to prevent their declaring the contract null and void; but at last a new, clean one thousand-dollar note was passed over to me, which in hot haste I transferred to Sam at his residence.

That evening there was a meeting of the committee: all seemed in high spirits again, except Hooker of Jayhawk. This old wretch sat back and shook his head during the entire session, and just before adjournment said, as he took his hat to go, that p'r'aps 'twas orl right and on the squar'; maybe thar war'n't any shenannigan, but *he* war dubersome—yes,

he war dubersome. The old curmudgeon repeated this until I was exasperated beyond restraint.

"Mr. Hooker," said I, "I've known Sam Henly ever since he was *so* high, and there isn't an honester man in old Missouri. Sam Henly's word is as good as his note! What's more, if any gentleman thinks he would enjoy a first-class funeral, and if he will supply the sable accessories, I'll supply the corpse. And he can take it home with him from this meeting."

At this point Mr. Hooker was troubled with leaving.

Having got this business off my conscience I slept late next day. When I stepped into the street I saw at once that something was "up." There were knots of people gathered at the corners, some reading eagerly that morning's issue of the *Bugle,* some gesticulating, and others stalking moodily about muttering curses, not loud but deep. Suddenly I heard an excited clamor—a confused roar of many lungs, and the trampling of innumerable feet. In this babel of noises I could distinguish the words "Kill him!" "Wa'm his hide!" and so forth; and, looking up the street, I saw what seemed to be the whole

male population racing down it. I am very excitable, and, though I did not know whose hide was to be warmed, nor why anyone was to be killed, I shot off in front of the howling masses, shouting "Kill him!" and "Warm his hide!" as loudly as the loudest, all the time looking out for the victim. Down the street we flew like a storm; then I turned a corner, thinking the scoundrel must have gone up *that* street; then bolted through a public square; over a bridge; under an arch; finally back into the main street; yelling like a panther, and resolved to slaughter the first human being I should overtake. The crowd followed my lead, turning as I turned, shrieking as I shrieked, and—all at once it came to me that *I* was the man whose hide was to be warmed!

It is needless to dwell upon the sensation this discovery gave me; happily I was within a few yards of the committee-rooms, and into these I dashed, closing and bolting the doors behind me, and mounting the stairs like a flash. The committee was in solemn session, sitting in a nice, even row on the front benches, each man with his elbows on his knees, and his chin resting in the palms of his hands—thinking. At each man's feet lay a neglected copy of the *Bugle*. Every member fixed his eyes

on me, but no one stirred, none uttered a sound. There was something awful in this preternatural silence, made more impressive by the hoarse murmur of the crowd outside, breaking down the door. I could endure it no longer, but strode forward and snatched up the paper lying at the feet of the chairman. At the head of the editorial columns, in letters half an inch long, were the following amazing head-lines:

"Dastardly Outrage! Corruption Rampant in Our Midst! The Vampires Foiled! Henry Barber at his Old Game! The Rat Gnaws a File! The Democratic Hordes Attempt to Ride Roughshod Over a Free People! Base Endeavor to Bribe the Editor of this Paper with *a Twenty-Dollar Note!* The Money Given to the Orphan Asylum."

I read no farther, but stood stockstill in the center of the floor, and fell into a reverie. Twenty dollars! Somehow it seemed a mere trifle. Nine hundred and eighty dollars! I did not know there was so much money in the world. Twenty—no, eighty—one thousand dollars! There were big, black figures floating all over the floor. Incessant cataracts of them poured down the walls, stopped, and shied off as I looked at them, and began to go

it again when I lowered my eyes. Occasionally the figures 20 would take shape somewhere about the floor, and then the figures 980 would slide up and overlay them. Then, like the lean kine of Pharoah's dream, they would all march away and devour the fat naughts of the number 1,000. And dancing like gnats in the air were myriads of little caduceus-like, phantoms, thus—$$$$$. I could not at all make it out, but began to comprehend my position directly Old Hooker, without moving from his seat, began to drown the noise of countless feet on the stairs by elevating his thin falsetto:

"P'r'aps, Mr. Cheerman, it's orl on the squar'. We know Mr. Henly can't tell a lie; but I'm powerful dubersome that thar's a balyance dyue this yer committee from the gent who hez the flo'—if he ain't done gone laid it yout fo' sable ac—ac—fo' fyirst-class funerals."

I felt at that moment as if I should like to play the leading character in a first-class funeral myself. I felt that every man in my position ought to have a nice, comfortable coffin, with a silver door-plate, a foot-warmer, and bay-windows for his ears. How do you suppose you would have felt?

My leap from the window of that committee room, my speed in streaking it for the adjacent forest, my self-denial in ever afterward resisting the impulse to return to Berrywood and look after my political and material interests there—these I have always considered things to be justly proud of, and I hope I am proud of them.

"THE BUBBLE REPUTATION"

HOW ANOTHER MAN'S WAS SOUGHT AND PRICKED

IT was a stormy night in the autumn of 1930. The hour was about eleven. San Francisco lay in darkness, for the laborers at the gas works had struck and destroyed the company's property because a newspaper to which a cousin of the manager was a subscriber had censured the course of a potato merchant related by marriage to a member of the Knights of Leisure. Electric lights had not at that period been reinvented. The sky was filled with great masses of black cloud which, driven rapidly across the star-fields by winds unfelt on the earth and momentarily altering their fantastic forms, seemed instinct with a life and activity of their own and endowed with awful powers of evil, to the exercise of which they might at any time set their malignant will.

An observer standing, at this time, at the corner of Paradise avenue and Great White Throne walk in Sorrel Hill cemetery would have seen a human figure moving among the graves toward the Superintendent's residence. Dimly and fitfully visible in the intervals of thinner gloom, this figure had a most uncanny and disquieting aspect. A long black cloak shrouded it from neck to heel. Upon its head was a slouch hat, pulled down across the forehead and almost concealing the face, which was further hidden by a half-mask, only the beard being occasionally visible as the head was lifted partly above the collar of the cloak. The man wore upon his feet jack-boots whose wide, funnel-shaped legs had settled down in many a fold and crease about his ankles, as could be seen whenever accident parted the bottom of the cloak. His arms were concealed, but sometimes he stretched out the right to steady himself by a headstone as he crept stealthily but blindly over the uneven ground. At such times a close scrutiny of the hand would have disclosed in the palm the hilt of a poniard, the blade of which lay along the wrist, hidden in the sleeve. In short, the man's garb, his movements, the hour—everything proclaimed him a reporter.

But what did he there?

On the morning of that day the editor of the *Daily Malefactor* had touched the button of a bell numbered 216 and in response to the summons Mr. Longbo Spittleworth, reporter, had been shot into the room out of an inclined tube.

"I understand," said the editor, "that you are 216—am I right?"

"That," said the reporter, catching his breath and adjusting his clothing, both somewhat disordered by the celerity of his flight through the tube,—"that is my number."

"Information has reached us," continued the editor, "that the Superintendent of the Sorrel Hill cemetery—one Inhumio, whose very name suggests inhumanity—is guilty of the grossest outrages in the administration of the great trust confided to his hands by the sovereign people."

"The cemetery is private property," faintly suggested 216.

"It is alleged," continued the great man, disdaining to notice the interruption, "that in violation of popular rights he refuses to permit his accounts to be inspected by representatives of the press."

"Under the law, you know, he is re-

sponsible to the directors of the cemetery company," the reporter ventured to interject.

"They say," pursued the editor, heedless, "that the inmates are in many cases badly lodged and insufficiently clad, and that in consequence they are usually cold. It is asserted that they are never fed—except to the worms. Statements have been made to the effect that males and females are permitted to occupy the same quarters, to the incalculable detriment of public morality. Many clandestine villainies are alleged of this fiend in human shape, and it is desirable that his underground methods be unearthed in the *Malefactor*. If he resists we will drag his family skeleton from the privacy of his domestic closet. There is money in it for the paper, fame for you—are you ambitious, 216?"

"I am—bitious."

"Go, then," cried the editor, rising and waving his hand imperiously—"go and 'seek the bubble reputation'."

"The bubble shall be sought," the young man replied, and leaping into a man-hole in the floor, disappeared. A moment later the editor, who after dismissing his subordinate, had stood motionless, as if lost in thought,

sprang suddenly to the man-hole and shouted down it: "Hello, 216?"

"Aye, aye, sir," came up a faint and far reply.

"About that 'bubble reputation'—you understand, I suppose, that the reputation which you are to seek is that of the other man."

In the execution of his duty, in the hope of his employer's approval, in the costume of his profession, Mr. Longbo Spittleworth, otherwise known as 216, has already occupied a place in the mind's eye of the intelligent reader. Alas for poor Mr. Inhumio!

A few days after these events that fearless, independent and enterprising guardian and guide of the public, the San Francisco *Daily Malefactor,* contained a whole-page article whose headlines are here presented with some necessary typographical mitigation:

"Hell Upon Earth! Corruption Rampant in the Management of the Sorrel Hill Cemetery. The Sacred City of the Dead in the Leprous Clutches of a Demon in Human Form. Fiendish Atrocities Committed in 'God's Acre.' The Holy Dead Thrown around Loose. Fragments of Mothers. Segregation of a Beautiful Young Lady Who in Life Was the Light of a Happy Household.

A Superintendent Who Is an Ex-Convict. How He Murdered His Neighbor to Start the Cemetery. He Buries His Own Dead Elsewhere. Extraordinary Insolence to a Representative of the Public Press. Little Eliza's Last Words: 'Mamma, Feed Me to the Pigs.' A Moonshiner Who Runs an Illicit Bone-Button Factory in One Corner of the Grounds. Buried Head Downward. Revolting Mausoleistic Orgies. Dancing on the Dead. Devilish Mutilation—a Pile of Late Lamented Noses and Sainted Ears. No Separation of the Sexes; Petitions for Chaperons Unheeded. 'Veal' as Supplied to the Superintendent's Employees. A Miscreant's Record from His Birth. Disgusting Subserviency of Our Contemporaries and Strong Indications of Collusion. Nameless Abnormalities. 'Doubled Up Like a Nut-Cracker.' 'Wasn't Planted White.' Horribly Significant Reduction in the Price of Lard. The Question of the Hour: Whom Do You Fry Your Doughnuts In?"

THE OCEAN WAVE

A SHIPWRECKOLLECTION

AS I left the house she said I was a cruel old thing, and not a bit nice, and she hoped I never, never *would* come back. So I shipped as mate on the *Mudlark,* bound from London to wherever the captain might think it expedient to sail. It had not been thought advisable to hamper Captain Abersouth with orders, for when he could not have his own way, it had been observed, he would contrive in some ingenious way to make the voyage unprofitable. The owners of the *Mudlark* had grown wise in their generation, and now let him do pretty much as he pleased, carrying such cargoes as he fancied to ports where the nicest women were. On the voyage of which I write he had taken no cargo at all; he said it would only make the *Mudlark* heavy and slow. To hear this mariner talk one would have supposed he did not know very much about commerce.

We had a few passengers—not nearly so many as we had laid in basins and stewards

for; for before coming off to the ship most of those who had bought tickets would inquire whither she was bound, and when not informed would go back to their hotels and send a bandit on board to remove their baggage. But there were enough left to be rather troublesome. They cultivated the rolling gait peculiar to sailors when drunk, and the upper deck was hardly wide enough for them to go from the forecastle to the binnacle to set their watches by the ship's compass. They were always petitioning Captain Abersouth to let the big anchor go, just to hear it plunge in the water, threatening in case of refusal to write to the newspapers. A favorite amusement with them was to sit in the lee of the bulwarks, relating their experiences in former voyages—voyages distinguished in every instance by two remarkable features, the frequency of unprecedented hurricanes and the entire immunity of the narrator from seasickness. It was very interesting to see them sitting in a row telling these things, each man with a basin between his legs.

One day there arose a great storm. The sea walked over the ship as if it had never seen a ship before and meant to enjoy it all it could. The *Mudlark* labored very much—

far more, indeed, than the crew did; for these innocents had discovered in possession of one of their number a pair of leather-seated trousers, and would do nothing but sit and play cards for them; in a month from leaving port each sailor had owned them a dozen times. They were so worn by being pushed over to the winner that there was little but the seat remaining, and that immortal part the captain finally kicked overboard—not maliciously, nor in an unfriendly spirit, but because he had a habit of kicking the seats of trousers.

The storm increased in violence until it succeeded in so straining the *Mudlark* that she took in water like a teetotaler; then it appeared to get relief directly. This may be said in justice to a storm at sea: when it has broken off your masts, pulled out your rudder, carried away your boats and made a nice hole in some inaccessible part of your hull it will often go away in search of a fresh ship, leaving you to take such measures for your comfort as you may think fit. In our case the captain thought fit to sit on the taffrail reading a three-volume novel.

Seeing he had got about half way through the second volume, at which point the lovers

would naturally be involved in the most hopeless and heart-rending difficulties, I thought he would be in a particularly cheerful humor, so I approached him and informed him the ship was going down.

"Well," said he, closing the book, but keeping his forefinger between the pages to mark his place, "she never would be good for much after such a shaking-up as this. But, I say—I wish you would just send the bo'sn for'd there to break up that prayer-meeting. The *Mudlark* isn't a seamen's chapel, I suppose."

"But," I replied, impatiently, "can't something be done to lighten the ship?"

"Well," he drawled, reflectively, "seeing she hasn't any masts left to cut away, nor any cargo to—stay, you might throw over some of the heaviest of the passengers if you think it would do any good."

It was a happy thought—the intuition of genius. Walking rapidly forward to the foc'sle, which, being highest out of water, was crowded with passengers, I seized a stout old gentleman by the nape of the neck, pushed him up to the rail, and chucked him over. He did not touch the water: he fell on the apex of a cone of sharks which sprang up from the sea to meet him, their noses gathered to a

point, their tails just clearing the surface. I think it unlikely that the old gentleman knew what disposition had been made of him. Next, I hurled over a woman and flung a fat baby to the wild winds. The former was sharked out of sight, the same as the old man; the latter divided amongst the gulls.

I am relating these things exactly as they occurred. It would be very easy to make a fine story out of all this material—to tell how that, while I was engaged in lightening the ship, I was touched by the self-sacrificing spirit of a beautiful young woman, who, to save the life of her lover, pushed her aged mother forward to where I was operating, imploring me to take the old lady, but spare, O, spare her dear Henry. I might go on to set forth how that I not only did take the old lady, as requested, but immediately seized dear Henry, and sent him flying as far as I could to leeward, having first broken his back across the rail and pulled a double-fistful of his curly hair out. I might proceed to state that, feeling appeased, I then stole the long boat and taking the beautiful maiden pulled away from the ill-fated ship to the church of St. Massaker, Fiji, where we were united by a knot which I afterward untied with my

teeth by eating her. But, in truth, nothing of all this occurred, and I can not afford to be the first writer to tell a lie just to interest the reader. What really did occur is this: as I stood on the quarter-deck, heaving over the passengers, one after another, Captain Abersouth, having finished his novel, walked aft and quietly hove *me* over.

The sensations of a drowning man have been so often related that I shall only briefly explain that memory at once displayed her treasures: all the scenes of my eventful life crowded, though without confusion or fighting, into my mind. I saw my whole career spread out before me, like a map of Central Africa since the discovery of the gorilla. There were the cradle in which I had lain, as a child, stupefied with soothing syrups; the perambulator, seated in which and propelled from behind, I overthrew the schoolmaster, and in which my infantile spine received its curvature; the nursery-maid, surrendering her lips alternately to me and the gardener; the old home of my youth, with the ivy and the mortgage on it; my eldest brother, who by will succeeded to the family debts; my sister, who ran away with the Count von Pretzel, coachman to a most respectable New York

family; my mother, standing in the attitude of a saint, pressing with both hands her prayer-book against the patent palpitators from Madame Fahertini's; my venerable father, sitting in his chimney corner, his silvered head bowed upon his breast, his withered hands crossed patiently in his lap, waiting with Christian resignation for death, and drunk as a lord—all this, and much more, came before my mind's eye, and there was no charge for admission to the show. Then there was a ringing sound in my ears, my senses swam better than I could, and as I sank down, down, through fathomless depths, the amber light falling through the water above my head failed and darkened into blackness. Suddenly my feet struck something firm—it was the bottom. Thank heaven, I was saved!

THE CAPTAIN OF "THE CAMEL"

THIS ship was named the *Camel.* In some ways she was an extraordinary vessel. She measured six hundred tons; but when she had taken in enough ballast to keep her from upsetting like a shot duck, and was provisioned for a three months' voyage, it was necessary to be mighty fastidious in the choice of freight and passengers. For illustration, as she was about to leave port a boat came alongside with two passengers, a man and his wife. They had booked the day before, but had remained ashore to get one more decent meal before committing themselves to the "briny cheap," as the man called the ship's fare. The woman came aboard, and the man was preparing to follow, when the captain leaned over the side and saw him.

"Well," said the captain, "what do *you* want?"

"What do *I* want?" said the man, laying

hold of the ladder. "I'm a-going to embark in this here ship—that's what I want."

"Not with all that fat on you," roared the captain. "You don't weigh an ounce less than eighteen stone, and I've got to have in my anchor yet. You wouldn't have me leave the anchor, I suppose?"

The man said he did not care about the anchor—he was just as God had made him (he looked as if his cook had had something to do with it) and, sink or swim, he purposed embarking in that ship. A good deal of wrangling ensued, but one of the sailors finally threw the man a cork life-preserver, and the captain said that would lighten him and he might come abroad.

This was Captain Abersouth, formerly of the *Mudlark*—as good a seaman as ever sat on the taffrail reading a three volume novel. Nothing could equal this man's passion for literature. For every voyage he laid in so many bales of novels that there was no stowage for the cargo. There were novels in the hold, and novels between-decks, and novels in the saloon, and in the passengers' beds.

The *Camel* had been designed and built by her owner, an architect in the City, and she looked about as much like a ship as

Noah's Ark did. She had bay windows and a veranda; a cornice and doors at the water-line. These doors had knockers and servant's bells. There had been a futile attempt at an area. The passenger saloon was on the upper deck, and had a tile roof. To this humplike structure the ship owed her name. Her designer had erected several churches—that of St. Ignotus is still used as a brewery in Hotbath Meadows—and, possessed of the ecclesiastic idea, had given the *Camel* a transept; but, finding this impeded her passage through the water, he had it removed. This weakened the vessel amidships. The mainmast was something like a steeple. It had a weathercock. From this spire the eye commanded one of the finest views in England.

Such was the *Camel* when I joined her in 1864 for a voyage of discovery to the South Pole. The expedition was under the "auspices" of the Royal Society for the Promotion of Fair Play. At a meeting of this excellent association, it had been "resolved" that the partiality of science for the North Pole was an invidious distinction between two objects equally meritorious; that Nature had marked her disapproval of it in the case of Sir John Franklin and many of his imitators; that it

served them very well right; that this enterprise should be undertaken as a protest against the spirit of undue bias; and, finally, that no part of the responsibility or expense should devolve upon the society in its corporate character, but any individual member might contribute to the fund if he were fool enough. It is only common justice to say that none of them was. The *Camel* merely parted her cable one day while I happened to be on board—drifted out of the harbor southward, followed by the execrations of all who knew her, and could not get back. In two months she had crossed the equator, and the heat began to grow insupportable.

Suddenly we were becalmed. There had been a fine breeze up to three o'clock in the afternoon and the ship had made as much as two knots an hour when without a word of warning the sails began to belly the wrong way, owing to the impetus that the ship had acquired; and then, as this expired, they hung as limp and lifeless as the skirts of a claw-hammer coat. The *Camel* not only stood stock still but moved a little backward toward England. Old Ben the boatswain said that he'd never knowed but one deader calm, and that, he explained, was when Preacher Jack, the

reformed sailor, had got excited in a sermon in a seaman's chapel and shouted that the Archangel Michael would chuck the Dragon into the brig and give him a taste of the rope's-end, damn his eyes!

We lay in this woful state for the better part of a year, when, growing impatient, the crew deputed me to look up the captain and see if something could not be done about it. I found him in a remote cobwebby corner between-decks, with a book in his hand. On one side of him, the cords newly cut, were three bales of "Ouida"; on the other a mountain of Miss M. E. Braddon towered above his head. He had finished "Ouida" and was tackling Miss Braddon. He was greatly changed.

"Captain Abersouth," said I, rising on tiptoe so as to overlook the lower slopes of Mrs. Braddon, "will you be good enough to tell me how long this thing is going on?"

"Can't say, I'm sure," he replied without pulling his eyes off the page. "They'll probably make up about the middle of the book. In the meantime old Pondronummus will foul his top-hamper and take out his papers for Looney Haven, and young Monshure de Boojower will come in for a

million. Then if the proud and fair Angelica doesn't luff and come into his wake after pizening that sea lawyer, Thundermuzzle, I don't know nothing about the deeps and shallers of the human heart."

I could not take so hopeful a view of the situation, and went on deck, feeling very much discouraged. I had no sooner got my head out than I observed that the ship was moving at a high rate of speed!

We had on board a bullock and a Dutchman. The bullock was chained by the neck to the foremast, but the Dutchman was allowed a good deal of liberty, being shut up at night only. There was bad blood between the two—a feud of long standing, having its origin in the Dutchman's appetite for milk and the bullock's sense of personal dignity; the particular cause of offense it would be tedious to relate. Taking advantage of his enemy's afternoon *siesta,* the Dutchman had now managed to sneak by him, and had gone out on the bowsprit to fish. When the animal waked and saw the other creature enjoying himself he straddled his chain, leveled his horns, got his hind feet against the mast and laid a course for the offender. The chain was strong, the mast firm, and the ship, as Byron

says, "walked the water like a thing of course."

After that we kept the Dutchman right where he was, night and day, the old *Camel* making better speed than she had ever done in the most favorable gale. We held due south.

We had now been a long time without sufficient food, particularly meat. We could spare neither the bullock nor the Dutchman; and the ship's carpenter, that traditional first aid to the famished, was a mere bag of bones. The fish would neither bite nor be bitten. Most of the running-tackle of the ship had been used for macaroni soup; all the leather work, our shoes included, had been devoured in omelettes; with oakum and tar we had made fairly supportable salad. After a brief experimental career as tripe the sails had departed this life forever. Only two courses remained from which to choose; we could eat one another, as is the etiquette of the sea, or partake of Captain Abersouth's novels. Dreadful alternative!—but a choice. And it is seldom, I think, that starving sailormen are offered a shipload of the best popular authors ready-roasted by the critics.

We ate that fiction. The works that the

captain had thrown aside lasted six months, for most of them were by the best-selling authors and were pretty tough. After they were gone—of course some had to be given to the bullock and the Dutchman—we stood by the captain, taking the other books from his hands as he finished them. Sometimes, when we were apparently at our last gasp, he would skip a whole page of moralizing, or a bit of description; and always, as soon as he clearly foresaw the *dénoûement*—which he generally did at about the middle of the second volume—the work was handed over to us without a word of repining.

The effect of this diet was not unpleasant but remarkable. Physically, it sustained us; mentally, it exalted us; morally, it made us but a trifle worse than we were. We talked as no human beings ever talked before. Our wit was polished but without point. As in a stage broadsword combat, every cut has its parry, so in our conversation every remark suggested the reply, and this necessitated a certain rejoinder. The sequence once interrupted, the whole was bosh; when the thread was broken the beads were seen to be waxen and hollow.

We made love to one another, and plotted darkly in the deepest obscurity of the hold.

Each set of conspirators had its proper listener at the hatch. These, leaning too far over would bump their heads together and fight. Occasionally there was confusion amongst them: two or more would assert a right to overhear the same plot. I remember at one time the cook, the carpenter, the second assistant-surgeon, and an able seaman contended with handspikes for the honor of betraying my confidence. Once there were three masked murderers of the second watch bending at the same instant over the sleeping form of a cabin-boy, who had been heard to mutter, a week previously, that he had "Gold! gold!" the accumulation of eighty—yes, eighty—years' piracy on the high seas, while sitting as M.P. for the borough of Zaccheus-cum-Down, and attending church regularly. I saw the captain of the foretop surrounded by suitors for his hand, while he was himself fingering the edge of a packing-case, and singing an amorous ditty to a lady-love shaving at a mirror.

Our diction consisted, in about equal parts, of classical allusion, quotation from the stable, simper from the scullery, cant from the clubs, and the technical slang of heraldry. We boasted much of ancestry, and admired

the whiteness of our hands whenever the skin was visible through a fault in the grease and tar. Next to love, the vegetable kingdom, murder, arson, adultery and ritual, we talked most of art. The wooden figure-head of the *Camel,* representing a Guinea nigger detecting a bad smell, and the monochrome picture of two back-broken dolphins on the stern, acquired a new importance. The Dutchman had destroyed the nose of the one by kicking his toes against it, and the other was nearly obliterated by the slops of the cook; but each had its daily pilgrimage, and each constantly developed occult beauties of design and subtle excellences of execution. On the whole we were greatly altered; and if the supply of contemporary fiction had been equal to the demand, the *Camel,* I fear, would not have been strong enough to contain the moral and æsthetic forces fired by the maceration of the brains of authors in the gastric juices of sailors.

Having now got the ship's literature off his mind into ours, the captain went on deck for the first time since leaving port. We were still steering the same course, and, taking his first observation of the sun, the captain discovered that we were in latitude 83° south.

The heat was insufferable; the air was like the breath of a furnace within a furnace. The sea steamed like a boiling cauldron, and in the vapor our bodies were temptingly parboiled—our ultimate meal was preparing. Warped by the sun, the ship held both ends high out of the water; the deck of the forecastle was an inclined plane, on which the bullock labored at a disadvantage; but the bowsprit was now vertical and the Dutchman's tenure precarious. A thermometer hung against the mainmast, and we grouped ourselves about it as the captain went up to examine the register.

"One hundred and ninety degrees Fahrenheit!" he muttered in evident astonishment. "Impossible!" Turning sharply about, he ran his eyes over us, and inquired in a peremptory tone, "who's been in command while I was runnin' my eye over that book?"

"Well, captain," I replied, as respectfully as I knew how, "the fourth day out I had the unhappiness to be drawn into a dispute about a game of cards with your first and second officers. In the absence of those excellent seamen, sir, I thought it my duty to assume control of the ship."

"Killed 'em, hey?"

"Sir, they committed suicide by questioning the efficacy of four kings and an ace."

"Well, you lubber, what have you to say in defense of this extraordinary weather?"

"Sir, it is no fault of mine. We are far—very far south, and it is now the middle of July. The weather is uncomfortable, I admit; but considering the latitude and season, it is not, I protest, unseasonable."

"Latitude and season!" he shrieked, livid with rage—"latitude and season! Why, you junk-rigged, flat-bottomed, meadow lugger, don't you know any better than that? Didn't yer little baby brother ever tell ye that southern latitudes is colder than northern, and that July is the middle o' winter here? Go below, you son of a scullion, or I'll break your bones!"

"Oh! very well," I replied; "I'm not going to stay on deck and listen to such low language as that, I warn you. Have it your own way."

The words had no sooner left my lips, than a piercing cold wind caused me to cast my eye upon the thermometer. In the new régime of science the mercury was descending rapidly; but in a moment the instrument was obscured by a blinding fall of snow. Towering icebergs rose from the water on every side, hang-

ing their jagged masses hundreds of feet above the masthead, and shutting us completely in. The ship twisted and writhed; her decks bulged upward, and every timber groaned and cracked like the report of a pistol. The *Camel* was frozen fast. The jerk of her sudden stopping snapped the bullock's chain, and sent both that animal and the Dutchman over the bows, to accomplish their warfare on the ice.

Elbowing my way forward to go below, as I had threatened, I saw the crew tumble to the deck on either hand like ten-pins. They were frozen stiff. Passing the captain, I asked him sneeringly how he liked the weather under the new régime. He replied with a vacant stare. The chill had penetrated to the brain, and affected his mind. He murmured:

"In this delightful spot, happy in the world's esteem, and surrounded by all that makes existence dear, they passed the remainder of their lives. The End."

His jaw dropped. The captain of the *Camel* was dead.

THE MAN OVERBOARD

I

THE good ship *Nupple-duck* was drifting rapidly upon a sunken coral reef, which seemed to extend a reasonless number of leagues to the right and left without a break, and I was reading Macaulay's "Naseby Fight" to the man at the wheel. Everything was, in fact, going on as nicely as heart could wish, when Captain Abersouth, standing on the companion-stair, poked his head above deck and asked where we were. Pausing in my reading, I informed him that we had got as far as the disastrous repulse of Prince Rupert's cavalry, adding that if he would have the goodness to hold his jaw we should be making it awkward for the wounded in about three minutes, and he might bear a hand at the pockets of the slain. Just then the ship struck heavily, and went down!

Calling another ship, I stepped aboard, and gave directions to be taken to No. 900 Tottenham Court Road, where I had an aunt; then, walking aft to the man at the wheel, asked him if he would like to hear me read "Naseby Fight." He thought he would: he would like to hear that, and then I might pass on to something else—Kinglake's "Crimean War," the proceedings at the trial of Warren Hastings, or some such trifle, just to wile away the time till eight bells.

All this time heavy clouds had been gathering along the horizon directly in front of the ship, and a deputation of passengers now came to the man at the wheel to demand that she be put about, or she would run into them, which the spokesman explained would be unusual. I thought at the time that it certainly was not the regular thing to do, but, as I was myself only a passenger, did not deem it expedient to take a part in the heated discussion that ensued; and, after all, it did not seem likely that the weather in those clouds would be much worse than that in Tottenham Court Road, where I had an aunt.

It was finally decided to refer the matter to arbitration, and after many names had been submitted and rejected by both sides, it was

agreed that the captain of the ship should act as arbitrator if his consent could be obtained, and I was delegated to conduct the negotiations to that end. With considerable difficulty, I persuaded him to accept the responsibility.

He was a feeble-minded sort of fellow named Troutbeck, who was always in a funk lest he should make enemies; never reflecting that most men would a little rather be his enemies than not. He had once been the ship's cook, but had cooked so poisonously ill that he had been forcibly transferred from galley to quarter-deck by the dyspeptic survivors of his culinary career.

The little captain went aft with me to listen to arguments of the dissatisfied passengers and the obstinate steersman, as to whether we should take our chances in the clouds, or tail off and run for the opposite horizon; but on approaching the wheel, we found both helmsman and passengers in a condition of profound astonishment, rolling their eyes about towards every point of the compass, and shaking their heads in hopeless perplexity. It was rather remarkable, certainly: the bank of cloud which had worried the landsmen was now directly astern, and the ship was cutting

along lively in her own wake, toward the point from which she had come, and straight away from Tottenham Court Road! Everybody declared it was a miracle; the chaplain was piped up for prayers, and the man at the wheel was as truly penitent as if he had been detected robbing an empty poor-box.

The explanation was simple enough, and dawned upon me the moment I saw how matters stood. During the dispute between the helmsman and the deputation, the former had renounced his wheel to gesticulate, and I, thinking no harm, had amused myself, during a rather tedious debate, by revolving the thing this way and that, and had unconsciously put the ship about. By a coincidence not unusual in low latitudes, the wind had effected a corresponding transposition at the same time, and was now bowling us as merrily back toward the place where I had embarked, as it had previously wafted us in the direction of Tottenham Court Road, where I had an aunt. I must here so far anticipate, as to explain that some years later these various incidents—particularly the reading of "Naseby Fight"—led to the adoption, in our mercantile marine, of a rule which I believe is still extant, to the effect that one must not speak to the man at

the wheel unless the man at the wheel speaks first.

II

IT is only by inadvertence that I have omitted the information that the vessel in which I was now a pervading influence was the *Bonnyclabber* (Troutbeck, master), of Malvern Heights.

The *Bonnyclabber's* reactionary course had now brought her to the spot at which I had taken passage. Passengers and crew, fatigued by their somewhat awkward attempts to manifest their gratitude for our miraculous deliverance from the cloud-bank, were snoring peacefully in unconsidered attitudes about the deck, when the lookout man, perched on the supreme extremity of the mainmast, consuming a cold sausage, began an apparently preconcerted series of extraordinary and unimaginable noises. He coughed, sneezed, and barked simultaneously — bleated in one breath, and cackled in the next— sputteringly shrieked, and chatteringly squealed, with a bass of suffocated roars. There were desolutory vocal explosions, tapering off in long wails, half smothered in un-

intelligible small-talk. He whistled, wheezed, and trumpeted; began to sharp, thought better of it and flatted; neighed like a horse, and then thundered like a drum! Through it all he continued making incomprehensible signals with one hand while clutching his throat with the other. Presently he gave it up, and silently descended to the deck.

By this time we were all attention; and no sooner had he set foot amongst us, than he was assailed with a tempest of questions which, had they been visible, would have resembled a flight of pigeons. He made no reply—not even by a look, but passed through our enclosing mass with a grim, defiant step, a face deathly white, and a set of the jaw as of one repressing an ambitious dinner, or ignoring a venomous toothache. For the poor man was choking!

Passing down the companion-way, the patient sought the surgeon's cabin, with the ship's company at his heels. The surgeon was fast asleep, the lark-like performance at the masthead having been inaudible in that lower region. While some of us were holding a whisky-bottle to the medical nose, in order to apprise the medical intelligence of the demand upon it, the patient seated himself in

statuesque silence. By this time his pallor, which was but the mark of a determined mind, had given place to a fervent crimson, which visibly deepened into a pronounced purple, and was ultimately superseded by a clouded blue, shot through with opalescent gleams, and smitten with variable streaks of black. The face was swollen and shapeless, the neck puffy. The eyes protruded like pegs of a hat-stand.

Pretty soon the doctor was got awake, and after making a careful examination of his patient, remarking that it was a lovely case of *stopupagus æsophagi,* took a tool and set to work, producing with no difficulty a cold sausage of the size, figure, and general bearing of a somewhat self-important banana. The operation had been performed amid breathless silence, but the moment it was concluded the patient, whose neck and head had visibly collapsed, sprang to his feet and shouted:

"Man overboard!"

That is what he had been trying to say.

There was a confused rush to the upper deck, and everybody flung something over the ship's side—a life-belt, a chicken-coop, a coil of rope, a spar, an old sail, a pocket handker-

chief, an iron crowbar—any movable article which it was thought might be useful to a drowning man who had followed the vessel during the hour that had elapsed since the initial alarm at the mast-head. In a few moments the ship was pretty nearly dismantled of everything that could be easily renounced, and some excitable passenger having cut away the boats there was nothing more that we could do, though the chaplain explained that if the ill-fated gentleman in the wet did not turn up after a while it was his intention to stand at the stern and read the burial service of the Church of England.

Presently it occurred to some ingenious person to inquire who had gone overboard, and all hands being mustered and the roll called, to our great chagrin every man answered to his name, passengers and all! Captain Troutbeck, however, held that in a matter of so great importance a simple roll-call was insufficient, and with an assertion of authority that was encouraging insisted that every person on board be separately sworn. The result was the same; nobody was missing and the captain, begging pardon for having doubted our veracity, retired to his cabin to avoid further responsibility, but expressed a hope that for the

purpose of having everything properly recorded in the log-book we would apprise him of any further action that we might think it advisable to take. I smiled as I remembered that in the interest of the unknown gentleman whose peril we had overestimated I had flung the log-book over the ship's side.

Soon afterward I felt suddenly inspired with one of those great ideas that come to most men only once or twice in a lifetime, and to the ordinary story teller never. Hastily reconvening the ship's company I mounted the capstan and thus addressed them:

"Shipmates, there has been a mistake. In the fervor of an ill-considered compassion we have made pretty free with certain movable property of an eminent firm of shipowners of Malvern Heights. For this we shall undoubtedly be called to account if we are ever so fortunate as to drop anchor in Tottenham Court Road, where I have an aunt. It would add strength to our defence if we could show to the satisfaction of a jury of our peers that in heeding the sacred promptings of humanity we had acted with some small degree of common sense. If, for example, we could make it appear that there really was a man overboard, who might have been comforted and

sustained by the material consolation that we so lavishly dispensed in the form of buoyant articles belonging to others, the British heart would find in that fact a mitigating circumstance pleading eloquently in our favor. Gentlemen and ship's officers, I venture to propose that we do now throw a man overboard."

The effect was electrical: the motion was carried by acclamation and there was a unanimous rush for the now wretched mariner whose false alarm at the masthead was the cause of our embarrassment, but on second thoughts it was decided to substitute Captain Troutbeck, as less generally useful and more undeviatingly in error. The sailor had made one mistake of considerable magnitude, but the captain's entire existence was a mistake altogether. He was fetched up from his cabin and chucked over.

At 900 Tottenham Road Court lived an aunt of mine—a good old lady who had brought me up by hand and taught me many wholesome lessons in morality, which in my later life have proved of extreme value. Foremost among these I may mention her solemn and oft-repeated injunction never to tell a lie without a definite and specific reason for doing so. Many years' experience in the viola-

tion of this principle enables me to speak with authority as to its general soundness. I have, therefore, much pleasure in making a slight correction in the preceding chapter of this tolerably true history. It was there affirmed that I threw the *Bonnyclabber's* log-book into the sea. The statement is entirely false, and I can discover no reason for having made it that will for a moment weigh against those I now have for the preservation of that log-book.

The progress of the story has developed new necessities, and I now find it convenient to quote from that book passages which it could not have contained if cast into the sea at the time stated; for if thrown upon the resources of my imagination I might find the temptation to exaggerate too strong to be resisted.

It is needless to worry the reader with those entries in the book referring to events already related. Our record will begin on the day of the captain's consignment to the deep, after which era I made the entries myself.

"June 22nd.—Not much doing in the way of gales, but heavy swells left over from some previous blow. Latitude and longitude not notably different from last observation. Ship laboring a trifle, owing to lack of top-hamper,

everything of that kind having been cut away in consequence of Captain Troutbeck having accidently fallen overboard while fishing from the bowsprit. Also threw over cargo and everything that we could spare. Miss our sails rather, but if they save our dear captain, we shall be content. Weather flagrant.

"23d.—Nothing from Captain Troutbeck. Dead calm—also dead whale. The passengers having become preposterous in various ways, Mr. Martin, the chief officer, had three of the ringleaders tied up and rope's-ended. He thought it advisable also to flog an equal number of the crew, by way of being impartial. Weather ludicrous.

"24th.—Captain still prefers to stop away, and does not telegraph. The 'captain of the foretop'—there isn't any foretop now—was put in irons to-day by Mr. Martin for eating cold sausage while on look-out. Mr. Martin has flogged the steward, who had neglected to holy-stone the binnacle and paint the dead-lights. The steward is a good fellow all the same. Weather iniquitous.

"25th.—Can't think whatever has become of Captain Troutbeck. He must be getting hungry by this time; for although he has his fishing-tackle with him, he has no bait. Mr.

Martin inspected the entries in this book to-day. He is a most excellent and humane officer. Weather inexcusable.

"26th.—All hope of hearing from the Captain has been abandoned. We have sacrificed everything to save him; but now, if we could procure the loan of a mast and some sails, we should proceed on our voyage. Mr. Martin has knocked the coxswain overboard for sneezing. He is an experienced seaman, a capable officer, and a Christian gentleman—damn his eyes! Weather tormenting.

"27th.—Another inspection of this book by Mr. Martin. Farewell, vain world! Break it gently to my aunt in Tottenham Court Road."

In the concluding sentences of this record, as it now lies before me, the handwriting is not very legible: they were penned under circumstances singularly unfavorable. Mr. Martin stood behind me with his eyes fixed on the page; and in order to secure a better view, had twisted the machinery of the engine he called his hand into the hair of my head, depressing that globe to such an extent that my nose was flattened against the surface of the table, and I had no small difficulty in discerning the lines through my eyebrows. I was not accustomed to writing in that position: it

had not been taught in the only school that I ever attended. I therefore felt justified in bringing the record to a somewhat abrupt close, and immediately went on deck with Mr. Martin, he preceding me up the companion-stairs on foot, I following, not on horseback, but on my own, the connection between us being maintained without important alteration.

Arriving on deck, I thought it advisable, in the interest of peace and quietness, to pursue him in the same manner to the side of the ship, where I parted from him forever with many expressions of regret, which might have been heard at a considerable distance.

Of the subsequent fate of the *Bonnyclabber,* I can only say that the log-book from which I have quoted was found some years later in the stomach of a whale, along with some shreds of clothing, a few buttons and several decayed life-belts. It contained only one new entry, in a straggling handwriting, as if it had been penned in the dark:

"july2th foundered svivors rescude by wale wether stuffy no nues from capting trowtbeck Sammle martin cheef Ofcer."

Let us now take a retrospective glance at the situation. The ship *Nupple-duck,* (Aber-

south, master) had, it will be remembered, gone down with all on board except me. I had escaped on the ship *Bonnyclabber* (Troutbeck) which I had quitted owing to a misunderstanding with the chief officer, and was now unattached. That is how matters stood when, rising on an unusually high wave, and casting my eye in the direction of Tottenham Court Road—that is, backward along the course pursued by the *Bonnyclabber* and toward the spot at which the *Nupple-duck* had been swallowed up—I saw a quantity of what appeared to be wreckage. It turned out to be some of the stuff that we had thrown overboard under a misapprehension. The several articles had been compiled and, so to speak, carefully edited. They were, in fact, lashed together, forming a raft. On a stool in the center of it—not, apparently navigating it, but rather with the subdued and dignified bearing of a passenger, sat Captain Abersouth, of the *Nupple-duck,* reading a novel.

Our meeting was not cordial. He remembered me as a man of literary taste superior to his own and harbored resentment, and although he made no opposition to my taking passage with him I could see that his acquiescence was due rather to his muscular in-

feriority than to the circumstance that I was damp and taking cold. Merely acknowledging his presence with a nod as I climbed abroad, I seated myself and inquired if he would care to hear the concluding stanzas of "Naseby Fight."

"No," he replied, looking up from his novel, "no, Claude Reginald Gump, writer of sea stories, I've done with you. When you sank the *Nupple-duck* some days ago you probably thought that you had made an end of me. That was clever of you, but I came to the surface and followed the other ship—the one on which you escaped. It was I that the sailor saw from the masthead. I saw him see me. It was for me that all that stuff was hove overboard. Good—I made it into this raft. It was, I think, the next day that I passed the floating body of a man whom I recognized as my old friend Billy Troutbeck—he used to be a cook on a man-o'-war. It gives me pleasure to be the means of saving your life, but I eschew you. The moment that we reach port our paths part. You remember that in the very first sentence of this story you began to drive my ship, the *Nupple-duck,* on to a reef of coral."

I was compelled to confess that this was

true, and he continued his inhospitable reproaches:

"Before you had written half a column you sent her to the bottom, with me and the crew. But *you*—you escaped."

"That is true," I replied; "I cannot deny that the facts are correctly stated."

"And in a story before that, you took me and my mates of the ship *Camel* into the heart of the South Polar Sea and left us frozen dead in the ice, like flies in amber. But you did not leave yourself there—you escaped."

"Really, Captain," I said, "your memory is singularly accurate, considering the many hardships that you have had to undergo; many a man would have gone mad."

"And a long time before that," Captain Abersouth resumed, after a pause, more, apparently, to con his memory than to enjoy my good opinion of it, "you lost me at sea—look here; I didn't read anything but George Eliot at that time, but I'm *told* that you lost me at sea in the *Mudlark*. Have I been misinformed?"

I could not say he had been misinformed.

"You yourself escaped on that occasion, I think."

It was true. Being usually the hero of my

own stories, I commonly do manage to live through one, in order to figure to advantage in the next. It is from artistic necessity: no reader would take much interest in a hero who was dead before the beginning of the tale. I endeavored to explain this to Captain Abersouth. He shook his head.

"No," said he, "it's cowardly, that's the way I look at it."

Suddenly an effulgent idea began to dawn upon me, and I let it have its way until my mind was perfectly luminous. Then I rose from my seat, and frowning down into the upturned face of my accuser, spoke in severe and rasping accents thus:

"Captain Abersouth, in the various perils you and I have encountered together in the classical literature of the period, if I have always escaped and you have always perished; if I lost you at sea in the *Mudlark,* froze you into the ice at the South Pole in the *Camel* and drowned you in the *Nupple-duck,* pray be good enough to tell me whom I have the honor to address."

It was a blow to the poor man: no one was ever so disconcerted. Flinging aside his novel, he put up his hands and began to scratch his head and think. It was beautiful

to see him think, but it seemed to distress him and pointing significantly over the side of the raft I suggested as delicately as possible that it was time to act. He rose to his feet and fixing upon me a look of reproach which I shall remember as long as I can, cast himself into the deep. As to me—I escaped.

A CARGO OF CAT

ON the 16th day of June, 1874, the ship *Mary Jane* sailed from Malta, heavily laden with cat. This cargo gave us a good deal of trouble. It was not in bales, but had been dumped into the hold loose. Captain Doble, who had once commanded a ship that carried coals, said he had found that plan the best. When the hold was full of cat the hatch was battened down and we felt good. Unfortunately the mate, thinking the cats would be thirsty, introduced a hose into one of the hatches and pumped in a considerable quantity of water, and the cats of the lower levels were all drowned.

You have seen a dead cat in a pond: you remember its circumference at the waist. Water multiplies the magnitude of a dead cat by ten. On the first day out, it was observed that the ship was much strained. She was three feet wider than usual and as much as ten feet shorter. The convexity of her deck was visibly

augmented fore and aft, but she turned up at both ends. Her rudder was clean out of water and she would answer the helm only when running directly against a strong breeze: the rudder, when perverted to one side, would rub against the wind and slew her around; and then she wouldn't steer any more. Owing to the curvature of the keel, the masts came together at the top, and a sailor who had gone up the foremast got bewildered, came down the mizzenmast, looked out over the stern at the receding shores of Malta and shouted: "Land, ho!" The ship's fastenings were all giving way; the water on each side was lashed into foam by the tempest of flying bolts that she shed at every pulsation of the cargo. She was quietly wrecking herself without assistance from wind or wave, by the sheer internal energy of feline expansion.

I went to the skipper about it. He was in his favorite position, sitting on the deck, supporting his back against the binnacle, making a V of his legs, and smoking.

"Captain Doble," I said, respectfully touching my hat, which was really not worthy of respect, "this floating palace is afflicted with curvature of the spine and is likewise greatly swollen."

Without raising his eyes he courteously acknowledged my presence by knocking the ashes from his pipe.

"Permit me, Captain," I said, with simple dignity, "to repeat that this ship is much swollen."

"If that is true," said the gallant mariner, reaching for his tobacco pouch, "I think it would be as well to swab her down with liniment. There's a bottle of it in my cabin. Better suggest it to the mate."

"But, Captain, there is no time for empirical treatment; some of the planks at the water line have started."

The skipper rose and looked out over the stern, toward the land; he fixed his eyes on the foaming wake; he gazed into the water to starboard and to port. Then he said:

"My friend, the whole darned thing has started."

Sadly and silently I turned from that obdurate man and walked forward. Suddenly "there was a burst of thunder sound!" The hatch that had held down the cargo was flung whirling into space and sailed in the air like a blown leaf. Pushing upward through the hatchway was a smooth, square column of cat. Grandly and impressively it grew—

slowly, serenely, majestically it rose toward the welkin, the relaxing keel parting the mast-heads to give it a fair chance. I have stood at Naples and seen Vesuvius painting the town red—from Catania have marked afar, upon the flanks of Ætna, the lava's awful pursuit of the astonished rooster and the despairing pig. The fiery flow from Kilauea's crater, thrusting itself into the forests and licking the entire country clean, is as familiar to me as my mother-tongue. I have seen glaciers, a thousand years old and quite bald, heading for a valley full of tourists at the rate of an inch a month. I have seen a saturated solution of mining camp going down a mountain river, to make a sociable call on the valley farmers. I have stood behind a tree on the battle-field and seen a compact square mile of armed men moving with irresistible momentum to the rear. Whenever anything grand in magnitude or motion is billed to appear I commonly manage to beat my way into the show, and in reporting it I am a man of unscrupulous veracity; but I have seldom observed anything like that solid gray column of Maltese cat!

It is unnecessary to explain, I suppose, that each individual grimalkin in the outfit, with

that readiness of resource which distinguishes the species, had grappled with tooth and nail as many others as it could hook on to. This preserved the formation. It made the column so stiff that when the ship rolled (and the *Mary Jane* was a devil to roll) it swayed from side to side like a mast, and the Mate said if it grew much taller he would have to order it cut away or it would capsize us.

Some of the sailors went to work at the pumps, but these discharged nothing but fur. Captain Doble raised his eyes from his toes and shouted: "Let go the anchor!" but being assured that nobody was touching it, apologized and resumed his revery. The chaplain said if there were no objections he would like to offer up a prayer, and a gambler from Chicago, producing a pack of cards, proposed to throw round for the first jack. The parson's plan was adopted, and as he uttered the final "amen," the cats struck up a hymn.

All the living ones were now above deck, and every mother's son of them sang. Each had a pretty fair voice, but no ear. Nearly all their notes in the upper register were more or less cracked and disobedient. The remarkable thing about the voices was their range. In that crowd were cats of seventeen octaves, and

the average could not have been less than twelve.

Number of cats, as per invoice.....	127,000
Estimated number dead swellers...	6,000
Total songsters	121,000
Average number octaves per cat....	12
Total octaves	1,452,000

It was a great concert. It lasted three days and nights, or, counting each night as seven days, twenty-four days altogether, and we could not go below for provisions. At the end of that time the cook came for'd shaking up some beans in a hat, and holding a large knife.

"Shipmates," said he, "we have done all that mortals can do. Let us now draw lots."

We were blindfolded in turn, and drew, but just as the cook was forcing the fatal black bean upon the fattest man, the concert closed with a suddenness that waked the man on the lookout. A moment later every grimalkin relaxed his hold on his neighbors, the column lost its cohesion and, with 121,000 dull, sickening thuds that beat as one, the whole business fell to the deck. Then with a wild farewell wail that feline host sprang

spitting into the sea and struck out southward for the African shore!

The southern extension of Italy, as every schoolboy knows, resembles in shape an enormous boot. We had drifted within sight of it. The cats in the fabric had spied it, and their alert imaginations were instantly affected with a lively sense of the size, weight and probable momentum of its flung boot-jack.

"ON WITH THE DANCE!"

A REVIEW

I

THE PRUDE IN LETTERS AND LIFE

IT is deserving of remark and censure that American literature is become shockingly moral. There is not a doubt of it; our writers, if accused, would make explicit confession that morality is their only fault—morality in the strict and specific sense. Far be it from me to disparage and belittle this decent tendency to ignore the largest side of human nature, and liveliest element of literary interest. It has an eminence of its own; if it is not great art, it is at least great folly—a superior sort of folly to which none of the masters of letters has ever attained. Not Shakspeare, nor Cervantes, nor Goethe, nor Molière, nor —no, not even Rabelais—ever achieved that shining pinnacle of propriety to which the latter-day American has aspired, by turning his back upon nature's broad and fruitful levels and his eyes upon the passionate altit-

udes where, throned upon congenial ice, Miss Nancy sits to censure letters, putting the Muses into petticoats and affixing a fig-leaf upon Truth. Ours are an age and country of expurgated editions, emasculated art, and social customs that look over the top of a fan.

> Lo! prude-eyed Primdimity, mother of Gush,
> Sex-conscious, invoking the difficult blush;
> At vices that plague us and sins that beset
> Sternly directing her private lorgnette,
> Whose lenses, self-searching instinctive for sin,
> Make image without of the fancies within.
> Itself, if examined, would show us, alas!
> A tiny transparency (French) on each glass.

Now, prudery in letters, if it would but have the goodness not to coëxist with prudery in life, might be suffered with easy fortitude, inasmuch as one needs not read what one does not like; and between the license of the dear old bucks above mentioned, and the severities of Miss Nancy Howells, and Miss Nancy James, Jr., of t'other school, there is latitude for gratification of individual taste. But it occurs that a literature rather accurately reflects all the virtues and other vices of its period and country, and its tendencies are but

the matchings of thought with action. Hence, we may reasonably expect to find—and indubitably shall find—certain well-marked correspondences between the literary faults which it pleases our writers to commit and the social crimes which it pleases the Adversary to see their readers commit. Within the current lustrum the prudery which had already, for some seasons, been achieving a vinegar-visaged and corkscrew-curled certain age in letters, has invaded the ball-room, and is infesting it in quantity. Supportable, because evitable, in letters, it is here, for the contrary reason, insufferable; for one must dance and enjoy one's self whether one like it or not. Pleasure, I take it, is a duty not to be shirked at the command of disinclination. Youth, following the bent of inherited instinct, and loyally conforming himself to the centuries, must shake a leg in the dance, and Age, from emulation and habit, and for denial of rheumatic incapacity, must occasionally twist his heel though he twist it off in the performance. Dance we must, and dance we shall; that is settled; the question of magnitude is, Shall we caper jocundly with the good grace of an easy conscience, or submit to shuffle half-heartedly with a sense of shame, wincing under the slow

stroke of our own rebuking eye? To this momentous question let us now intelligently address our minds, sacredly pledged, as becomes lovers of truth, to its determination in the manner most agreeable to our desires; and if, in pursuance of this laudable design, we have the unhappiness to bother the bunions decorating the all-pervading feet of the good people whose deprecations are voiced in *The Dance of Death* and the clamatory literature of which that blessed volume was the honored parent, upon their own corns be it; they should not have obtruded these eminences

> when youth and pleasure meet
> To chase the glowing hours with flying feet.

What, therefore, whence, and likewise why, is dancing? From what flower of nature, fertilized by what pollen of circumstance or necessity, is it the fruit? Let us go to the root of the matter.

II

THE BEATING OF THE BLOOD

NATURE takes a childish delight in tireless

repetition. The days repeat themselves, the tibes ebb and flow, the tree sways forth and back. This world is intent upon recurrences. Not the pendulum of a clock is more persistent of iteration than are all existing things; periodicity is the ultimate law and largest explanation of the universe—to do it over again the one insatiable ambition of all that is. Everything vibrates; through vibration alone do the senses discern it. We are not provided with means of cognizance of what is absolutely at rest; impressions come in waves. Recurrence, recurrence, and again recurrence—that is the sole phenomenon. With what fealty we submit us to the law which compels the rhythm and regularity to our movement—that makes us divide up passing time into brief equal intervals, marking them off by some method of physical notation, so that our senses may apprehend them! In all we do we unconsciously mark time like a clock, the leader of an orchestra with his *bâton* only more perfectly than the smith with his hammer, or the woman with her needle, because his hand is better assisted by his ear, less embarrassed with *impedimenta.* The pedestrian impelling his legs and the idler twiddling his thumbs are endeavoring, each in his uncon-

scious way, to beat time to some inaudible music; and the graceless lout, sitting cross-legged in a horse-car, manages the affair with his toe.

The more intently we labor, the more intensely do we become absorbed in labor's dumb song, until with body and mind engaged in the ecstacy of repetition, we resent an interruption of our work as we do a false note in music, and are mightily enamored of ourselves afterward for the power of application which was simply inability to desist. In this rhythm of toil is to be found the charm of industry. Toil has in itself no spell to conjure with, but its recurrences of molecular action, cerebral and muscular, are as delightful as rhyme.

Such of our pleasures as require movements equally rhythmic with those entailed by labor are almost equally agreeable, with the added advantage of being useless. Dancing, which is not only rhythmic movement, pure and simple, undebased with any element of utility, but is capable of performance under conditions positively baneful, is for these reasons the most engaging of them all; and if it were but one-half as wicked as the prudes have endeavored by method of naughty suggestion to make it

would lack of absolute bliss nothing but the other half.

This ever active and unabatable something within us which compels us always to be marking time we may call, for want of a better name, the instinct of rhythm. It is the æsthetic principle of our nature. Translated into words it has given us poetry; into sound, music; into motion, dancing. Perhaps even painting may be referred to it, space being the correlative of time, and color the correlative of tone. We are fond of arranging our minute intervals of time into groups. We find certain of these groups highly agreeable, while others are no end unpleasant. In the former there is a singular regularity to be observed, which led hard-headed old Leibnitz to the theory that our delight in music arises from an inherent affection for mathematics. Yet musicians have hitherto obtained but indifferent recognition for feats of calculation, nor have the singing and playing of renowned mathematicians been unanimously commended by good judges.

Music so intensifies and excites the instinct of rhythm that a strong volition is required to repress its physical expression. The universality of this is well illustrated by the legend, found in some shape in many countries and

languages, of the boy with the fiddle who compels king, cook, peasant, clown, and all that kind of people, to follow him through the land; and in the myth of the Pied Piper of Hamelin we discern abundant reason to think the instinct of rhythm an attribute of rats. Soldiers march so much livelier with music than without that it has been found a tolerably good substitute for the hope of plunder. When the foot-falls are audible, as on the deck of a steamer, walking has an added pleasure, and even the pirate, with gentle consideration for the universal instinct, suffers his vanquished foeman to walk the plank.

Dancing is simply marking time with the body, as an accompaniment to music, though the same—without the music—is done with only the head and forefinger in a New England meeting-house at psalm time. (The peculiar dance named in honor of St. Vitus is executed with or without music, at the option of the musician.) But the body is a clumsy piece of machinery, requiring some attention and observation to keep it accurately in time to the fiddling. The smallest diversion of the thought, the briefest relaxing of the mind, is fatal to the performance. 'Tis as easy to fix attention on a sonnet of Shakspeare

while working at whist as gloat upon your partner while waltzing. It can not be intelligently, appreciatively, and adequately accomplished—*crede expertum.*

On the subject of poetry, Emerson says: "Metre begins with pulse-beat, and the length of lines in songs and poems is determined by the inhalation and exhalation of the lungs," and this really goes near to the root of the matter; albeit we might derive therefrom the unsupported inference that a poet "fat and scant of breath" would write in lines of a foot each, while the more able-bodied bard, with the capacious lungs of a pearl-diver, would deliver himself all across his page, with "the spacious volubility of a drumming decasyllabon."

While the heart, working with alternate contraction and dilatation, sends the blood intermittently through the brain, and the outer world apprises us of its existence only by successive impulses, it must result that our sense of things will be rhythmic. The brain being alternately stimulated and relaxed we must think—as we feel—in waves, apprehending nothing continuously, and incapable of a consciousness that is not divisible into units of perception of which we make mental record

and physical sign. That is why we dance. That is why we can, may, must, will, and shall dance, and the gates of Philistia shall not prevail against us.

La valse légère, la valse légère,
The free, the bright, the debonair,
That stirs the strong, and fires the fair
With joy like wine of vintage rare—
That lends the swiftly circling pair
A short surcease of killing care,
With music in the dreaming air,
With elegance and grace to spare.
Vive! vive la valse, la valse légère!

—*George Jessop.*

III

THERE ARE CORNS IN EGYPT

OUR civilization—wise child!—knows its father in the superior civilization whose colossal vestiges are found along the Nile. To those, then, who see in the dance a civilizing art, it can not be wholly unprofitable to glance at this polite accomplishment as it existed among the ancient Egyptians, and was by them transmitted—with various modifications, but preserving its essentials of identity—to

other nations and other times. And here we have first to note that, as in all the nations of antiquity, the dance in Egypt was principally a religious ceremony; the pious old boys that builded the pyramids executed their jigs as an act of worship. Diodorus Siculus informs us that Osiris, in his proselyting travels among the peoples surrounding Egypt—for Osiris was what we would call a circuit preacher—was accompanied by dancers male and dancers female. From the sculptures on some of the oldest tombs of Thebes it is seen that the dances there depicted did not greatly differ from those in present favor in the same region; although it seems a fair inference from the higher culture and refinement of the elder period that they were distinguished by graces correspondingly superior. That dances having the character of religious rites were not always free from an element that we would term indelicacy, but which their performers and witnesses probably considered the commendable exuberance of zeal and devotion, is manifest from the following passage of Herodotus, in which reference is made to the festival of Bubastis:

> Men and women come sailing all together, vast numbers in each boat, many of the women with casta-

nets, which they strike, while some of the men pipe during the whole period of the voyage; the remainder of the voyagers, male and female, sing the while, and make a clapping with their hands. When they arrive opposite to any town on the banks of the stream they approach the shore, and while some of the women continue to play and sing, others call aloud to the females of the place and load them with abuse, a certain number dancing and others standing up, uncovering themselves. Proceeding in this way all along the river course they reach Bubastis, where they celebrate the feast with abundant sacrifice.

Of the mysteries of Isis and Osiris, in which dancing played an important part, the character of the ceremonies is matter of dim conjecture; but from the hints that have come down to us like significant shrugs and whispers from a discreet past, which could say a good deal more if it had a mind to, I hasten to infer that they were no better than they should have been.

Naturally the dances for amusement of others were regulated in movement and gesture to suit the taste of patrons: for the refined, decency and moderation; for the wicked, *a soupçon* of the other kind of excellence. In the latter case the buffoon, an invariable adjunct, committed a thousand extravagances, and was a dear, delightful, naughty ancient

Egyptian buffoon. These dances were performed by both men and women; sometimes together, more frequently in separate parties. The men seem to have confined themselves mostly to exercises requiring strength of leg and arm. The figures on the tombs represent men in lively and vigorous postures, some in attitude preliminary to leaping, others in the air. This feature of agility would be a novelty in the oriental dances of to-day; the indolent male spectator being satisfied with a slow, voluptuous movement congenial to his disposition. When, on the contrary, the performance of our prehistoric friends was governed and determined by ideas of grace, there were not infrequently from six to eight musical instruments, the harp, guitar, double-pipe, lyre, and tambourine of the period being most popular, and these commonly accompanied by a clapping of hands to mark the time.

As with the Greeks, dancers were had in at dinner to make merry; for although the upper-class Egyptian was forbidden to practice the art, either as an accomplishment or for the satisfaction of his emotional nature, it was not considered indecorous to hire professionals to perform before him and his female and young. The she dancer usually habited herself in a

loose, flowing robe, falling to the ankles and bound at the waist, while about the hips was fastened a narrow, ornate girdle. This costume—in point of opacity imperfectly superior to a gentle breeze—is not always discernible in the sculptures; but it is charitably believed that the pellucid garment, being merely painted over the figures, has been ravished away by the hand of Time—the wretch!

One of the dances was a succession of pleasing attitudes, the hands and arms rendering important assistance—the body bending backward and forward and swaying laterally, the *figurante* sometimes half-kneeling, and in that position gracefully posturing, and again balanced on one foot, the arms and hands waving slowly in time to the music. In another dance, the *pirouette* and other figures dear to the bald-headed beaux of the modern play-house, were practiced in the familiar way. Four thousand years ago, the senses of the young ancient Egyptian—wild, heady lad!—were kicked into confusion by the dark-skinned belle of the ballet, while senility, with dimmed eyes, rubbed its dry hands in feverish approval at the self-same feat. Dear, dear, but it was a bad world four thousand years ago!

Sometimes they danced in pairs, men with men and women with women, indifferently, the latter arrangement seeming to us preferable by reason of the women's conspicuously superior grace and almost equal agility; for it is in evidence on the tombs that tumblers and acrobats were commonly of the softer sex. Some of the attitudes were similar to those which drew from Socrates the ungallant remark that women were capable of learning anything which you will that they should know. The figures in this *pas de deux* appear frequently to have terminated in what children, with their customary coarseness of speech, are pleased to call "wringing the dish-clout"—clasping the hands, throwing the arms above the head and turning rapidly, each as on a pivot, without loosing the hands of the other, and resting again in position.

Sometimes, with no other music than the percussion of hands, a man would execute a *pas seul,* which it is to be presumed he enjoyed. Again, with a riper and better sense of musical methods, the performer accompanied himself, or, as in this case it usually was, herself, on the double-pipes, the guitar or the tambourine, while the familiar hand-clapping was done by attendants. A step not unlike that

of the abominable clog-dance of the "variety" stage and "music hall" of the present day consisted in striking the heel of first one foot and then the other, the hands and arms being employed to diminish the monotony of the movement. For amusement and instruction of the vulgar, buffoons in herds of ten or more infested the streets, hopping and posing to the sound of a drum.

As illustrating the versatility of the dance, its wide capacities of adaptation to human emotional needs, I may mention here the procession of women to the tomb of a friend or relative. Punishing the tambourine or *darabooka* drum, and bearing branches of palm or other symbolic vegetables, these sprightly mourners passed through the streets with songs and dances which, under the circumstances, can hardly have failed eminently to gratify the person so fortunate as to have his memory honored by so delicate and appropriate observance.

IV

A REEF IN THE GABARDINE

THE early Jew danced ritually and socially.

Some of his dances and the customs connected therewith were of his own devising; others he picked up in Egypt, the latter, no doubt, being more firmly fixed in his memory by the necessity of practicing them—albeit behind the back of Moses—while he had them still fresh in his mind; for he would naturally resort to every human and inhuman device to wile away the dragging decades consumed in tracing the labyrinthine sinuosities of his course in the wilderness. When a man has assurance that he will not be permitted to arive at the point for which he set out, perceiving that every step forward is a step wasted, he will pretty certainly use his feet to a better purpose than walking. Clearly, at a time when all the chosen people were Wandering Jews they would dance all they knew how. We know that they danced in worship of the Golden Calf, and that previously "Miriam the prophetess, sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances." And ever so many generations before, Laban complained to Jacob that Jacob had stolen away instead of letting him send him off with songs and mirth and music on the tabret and harp, a method of speeding the parting guest which

would naturally include dancing, although the same is not of explicit record.

The religious ceremonies of the Jews had not at all times the restraint and delicacy which it is to be wished the Lord had exacted, for we read of King David himself dancing before the Ark in a condition so nearly nude as greatly to scandalize the daughter of Saul. By the way, this incident has been always a stock argument for the extinction and decent interment of the unhappy anti-dancer. Conceding the necessity of his extinction, I am yet indisposed to attach much weight to the Davidian precedent, for it does not appear that he was acting under divine command, directly or indirectly imparted, and whenever he followed the hest of his own sweet will David had a notable knack at going wrong. Perhaps the best value of the incident consists in the evidence it supplies that dancing was not forbidden—save possibly by divine injunction—to the higher classes of Jews; for unless we are to suppose the dancing of David to have been the mere clumsy capering of a loutish mood (a theory which our respect for royalty, even when divested of its imposing externals, forbids us to entertain) we are bound to assume previous instruction and

practice in the art. We have, moreover, the Roman example of the daughter of Herodias, whose dancing before Herod was so admirably performed that she was suitably rewarded with a testimonial of her step-father's esteem. To these examples many more might be added, showing by cumulative evidence that among the ancient people whose religion was good enough for us to adopt and improve, dancing was a polite and proper accomplishment, although not always decorously executed on seasonable occasion.

V

ENTER A TROUPE OF ANCIENTS, DANCING

THE nearly oldest authentic human records now decipherable are the cuneiform inscriptions from the archives of Assurbanipal, translated by the late George Smith, of the British Museum; and in them we find abundant reference to the dance, but must content ourselves with a single one:

> The kings of Arabia who, against my agreement, sinned; whom in the midst of battle alive I had captured in hand, to make that Bitrichiti. Heavy burdens I

caused them to carry, and I caused them to take . . . building its brick-work . . . with dancing and music; . . . with joy and shouting, from the foundation to its roof, I built . . .

A Mesopotamian king, who had the genius to conceive the dazzling idea of communicating with the readers of this distant generation by taking impressions of carpet-tacks on cubes of unbaked clay is surely entitled to a certain veneration; and when he associates dancing with such commendable actions as making porters of his royal captives it is not becoming in us meaner mortals to set up a contrary opinion. Indeed, nothing can be more certain than that the art of dancing was not regarded by the ancients generally in the light of a frivolous accomplishment, nor its practice a thing wherewith to shoo away a tedious hour. In their minds it evidently had a certain dignity and elevation; so much so that they associated it with their ideas (tolerably correct ones, on the whole,) of art, harmony, beauty, truth and religion. With them, dancing bore a relation to walking and the ordinary movements of the limbs, similar to that which poetry bears to prose; and as our own Emerson—himself something of an an-

cient—defines poetry as the piety of the intellect, so Homer would doubtless have defined dancing as the devotion of the body if he had had the unspeakable advantage of a training in the Emerson school of epigram. Such a view of it is natural to the unsophisticated pagan mind, and to all minds of clean, wholesome, and simple understanding. It is only the intellect that has been subjected to the strain of overwrought religious enthusiasm of the more sombre sort that can discern a lurking devil in the dance, or anything but an exhilarating and altogether delightful outward manifestation of an inner sense of harmony, joy and well-being. Under the stress of morbid feeling, or the overstrain of religious excitement, coarsely organized natures see or create something gross and prurient in things intrinsically sweet and pure; and it happens that when the dance has fallen to their shaping and direction, as in religious rites, then it has received its most objectionable development and perversion. But the grossness of dances devised by the secular mind for purposes of æsthetic pleasure is all in the censorious critic, who deserves the same kind of rebuke administered by Dr. Johnson to Boswell, who asked the Doctor if he considered a certain nude

statue immodest. "No, sir; but your question is."

It would be an unfortunate thing, indeed, if the "prurient prudes" of the meeting-houses were permitted to make the laws by which society should be governed. The same unhappy psychological condition which makes the dance an unclean thing in their jaundiced eyes renders it impossible for them to enjoy art or literature when the subject is natural, the treatment free and joyous. The ingenuity that can discover an indelicate provocative in the waltz will have no difficulty in snouting out all manner of uncleanliness in Shakspeare, Chaucer, Boccacio—nay, even in the New Testament. It would detect an unpleasant suggestiveness in the Medicean Venus, and two in the Dancing Faun. To all such the ordinary functions of life are impure; the natural man and woman things to blush at; all the economies of nature full of shocking improprieties.

In the Primitive Church dancing was a religious rite, no less than it was under the older dispensation among the Jews. On the eve of sacred festivals, the young people were accustomed to assemble, sometimes before the church door, sometimes in the choir or nave of

the church, and dance and sing hymns in honor of the saint whose festival it was. Easter Sunday, especially, was so celebrated; and rituals of a comparatively modern date contain the order in which it is appointed that the dances are to be performed, and the words of the hymns to the music of which the youthful devotees flung up their pious heels. But I digress.

In Plato's time the Greeks held that dancing awakened and preserved in the soul—as I do not doubt that it does—the sentiment of harmony and proportion; and in accordance with this idea Simonides, with a happy knack at epigram, defined dances as "poems in dumb-show."

In his *Republic* Plato classifies the Grecian dances as domestic, designed for relaxation and amusement; military, to promote strength and activity in battle; and religious, to accompany the sacred songs at pious festivals. To the last class belongs the dance which Theseus is said to have instituted on his return from Crete, after having abated the Minotaur nuisance. At the head of a noble band of youth, this public-spirited reformer of abuses himself executed his dance. Theseus as a dancing-master does not much fire the imagination, it

is true, but the incident has its value and purpose in this dissertation. Theseus called his dance *Geranos,* or the "Crane," because its figures resembled those described by that fowl aflight; and Plutarch fancied he discovered in it a meaning which one does not so readily discover in Plutarch's explanation.

It is certain that, in the time of Anacreon,*

*It may be noted here that the popular conception of this poet as a frivolous sensualist is unsustained by evidence and repudiated by all having knowledge of the matter. Although love and wine were his constant themes, there is good ground for the belief that he wrote of them with greater *abandon* than he indulged in them—a not uncommon practice of the poet-folk, by the way, and one to which those who sing of deeds of arms are perhaps especially addicted. The great age which Anacreon attained points to a temperate life; and he more than once denounces intoxication with as great zeal as a modern reformer who has eschewed the flagon for the trencher. According to Anacreon, drunkenness is "the vice of barbarians;" though, for the matter of that, it is difficult to say what achievable vice is not. In Ode LXII, he sings:

Fill me, boy, as deep a draught
As e'er was filled, as e'er was quaffed;
But let the water amply flow
To cool the grape's intemperate glow.

. . . . .

For though the bowl's the grave of sadness,
Ne'er let it be the birth of madness;
No! banish from our board to-night
The revelries of rude delight;
To Scythians leave these wild excesses,
Ours be the joy that soothes and blesses!
And, while the temperate bowl we wreathe,
In concert let our voices breathe,
Beguiling every hour along
With harmony of soul and song.

Maximus of Tyre, speaking of Polycrates the Tyrant (tyrant, be it remembered, meant only usurper, not oppressor) considered the happiness of that potentate secure because he had a powerful navy and such a friend as Anacreon—the word navy naturally suggesting cold water, and cold water, Anacreon.

the Greeks loved the dance. That poet, with frequent repetition, felicitates himself that age has not deprived him of his skill in it. In Ode LIII, he declares that in the dance he renews his youth:

When I behold the festive train
Of dancing youth, I'm young again.

. . . . .

And let me, while the wild and young
Trip the mazy dance along,
Fling my heap of years away,
And be as wild, as young, as they.

—*Moore.*

And so in Ode LIX, which seems to be a vintage hymn:

> When he whose verging years decline
> As deep into the vale as mine,
> When he inhales the vintage cup,
> His feet, new-winged, from earth spring up,
> And, as he dances, the fresh air
> Plays, whispering, through his silvery hair.
>
> —*Id.*

In Ode XLVII, he boasts that age has not impaired his relish for, nor his power of indulgence in, the feast and dance:

> 'Tis true my fading years decline,
> Yet I can quaff the brimming wine
> As deep as any stripling fair
> Whose cheeks the flush of morning wear;
> And if amidst the wanton crew
> I'm called to wind the dance's clew,
> Then shalt thou see this vigorous hand
> Not faltering on the Bacchant's wand.
>
> . . . . .
>
> For, though my fading years decay—
> Though manhood's prime hath passed away,
> Like old Silenus, sire divine,
> With blushes borrowed from the wine
> I'll wanton 'mid the dancing train,
> And live my follies o'er again.
>
> —*Id.*

Cornelius Nepos, I think, mentions among the admirable qualities of the great Epaminondas that he had an extraordinary talent for music and dancing. Epaminondas accomplishing his jig must be accepted as a pleasing and instructive figure in the history of the dance.

Lucian says that a dancer must have some skill as an actor, and some acquaintance with mythology—the reason being that the dances at the festivals of the gods partook of the character of pantomime, and represented the most picturesque events and passages in the popular religion. Religious knowledge is happily no longer regarded as a necessary qualification for the dance; and, in point of fact, nothing is commonly more foreign to the minds of those who excel in it.

It is related of Aristides the Just that he danced at an entertainment given by Dionysius the Tyrant, and Plato, who was also a guest, probably confronted him in the set.

The "dance of the wine-press," described by Longinus, was originally modest and proper, but seems to have become in the process of time—and probably by the stealthy participation of disguised prudes—a kind of *can-can*.

In the high-noon of human civilization—in the time of Pericles at Athens—dancing seems to have been regarded as a civilizing and refining amusement in which the gravest dignitaries and most renowned worthies joined with indubitable alacrity, if problematic advantage. Socrates himself—at an advanced age, too—was persuaded by the virtuous Aspasia to cut his caper with the rest of them.

Horace (Ode IX, Book I,) exhorts the youth not to despise the dance:

> Nec dulcis amores
> Sperne puer, neque tu choreas.

Which may be freely translated thus:

> Boy, in Love's game don't miss a trick,
> Nor be in the dance a walking stick.

In Ode IV, Book I, he says:

> Jam Cytherea choros ducit, inminente Luna
> Junctæque Nymphis Gratiæ decentes
> Alterno terram quatiunt pede; etc.
>
> At moonrise, Venus and her joyous band
> Of Nymphs and Graces leg it o'er the land.

In Ode XXXVI, Book I (supposed to

have been written when Numida returned from the war in Spain, with Augustus, and referring to which an old commentator says: "We may judge with how much tenderness Horace loved his friends, when he celebrates their return with sacrifices, songs, and dances") Horace writes:

> Cressa ne careat pulchra dies nota;
> Neu promtæ modus amphoræ,
> Neu morem in Salium sit requies pedum; etc.
>
> Let not the day forego its mark,
> Nor lack the wine-jug's honest bark;
> Like Salian priests we'll toss our toes—
> Choose partners for the dance—here goes!

It has been hastily inferred that, in the time of Cicero, dancing was not held in good repute among the Romans; but I prefer to consider his ungracious dictum (in *De Amicitia,* I think,) *"Nemo sobrius saltat"*—no sober man dances—as merely the spiteful and envious fling of a man who could not himself dance, and am disposed to congratulate the golden youth of the Eternal City on the absence of the solemn, consequential and egotistic orator from their festivals and merry-makings, whence his shining talents would

have been so many several justifications for his forcible extrusion. No doubt his eminence procured him many invitations to balls of the period, and some of these he probably felt constrained to accept; but it is highly unlikely that he was often solicited to dance; he probably wiled away the tedious hours of inaction by instructing the fibrous virgins and gouty bucks in the principles of jurisprudence. Cicero as a wall-flower is an interesting object, and, turning to another branch of our subject, in this picturesque attitude we leave him. Left talking.

VI

CAIRO REVISITED

HAVING glanced, briefly, and as through a glass darkly, at the dance as it existed in the earliest times of which we have knowledge in the country whence, through devious and partly obliterated channels, we derived much of our civilization, let us hastily survey some of its modern methods in the same region—supplying thereby some small means of comparison to the reader who may care to note

the changes undergone and the features preserved.

We find the most notable, if not the only, purely Egyptian dancer of our time in the *Almé* or *Ghowazée*. The former name is derived from the original calling of this class —that of reciting poetry to the inmates of the harem; the latter they acquired by dancing at the festivals of the Ghors, or Memlooks. Reasonably modest at first, the dancing of the Almé became, in the course of time, so conspicuously indelicate that great numbers of the softer sex persuaded themselves to its acquirement and practice; and a certain viceregal Prude once contracted the powers of the whole Cairo contingent of Awâlim into the pent-up Utica of the town of Esuch, some five hundred miles removed from the viceregal dissenting eye. For a brief season the order was enforced; then the sprightly sinners danced out of bounds, and their successors can now be found by the foreign student of Egyptian morals without the fatigue and expense of a long journey up the Nile.

The professional dress of the Almé consists of a short embroidered jacket, fitting closely to the arms and back, but frankly un-

reserved in front; long loose trousers of silk sufficiently opaque somewhat to soften the severity of the lower limbs; a Cashmere shawl bound about the waist and a light turban of muslin embroidered with gold. The long black hair, starred with small coins, falls abundantly over the shoulders. The eyelids are sabled with kohl; and such other paints, oils, varnishes and dyestuffs are used as the fair one—who is a trifle dark, by the way—may have proved for herself, or accepted on the superior judgment of her European sisters. Altogether, the girl's outer and visible aspect is not unattractive to the eye of the traveler, however faulty to the eye of the traveler's wife. When about to dance, the Almé puts on a lighter and more diaphanous dress, eschews her slippers, and with a slow and measured step advances to the centre of the room—her lithe figure undulating with a grace peculiarly serpentile. The music is that of a reed pipe or a tambourine—a number of attendants assisting with castanets. Perhaps the "argument" of her dance will be a love-passage with an imaginary young Arab. The coyness of a first meeting by chance, her gradual warming into passion, their separation, followed by her tears and dejection, the hope

of meeting soon again and, finally, the intoxication of being held once more in his arms—all are delineated with a fidelity and detail surprising to whatever of judgment the masculine spectator may have the good fortune to retain.

One of the prime favorites is the "wasp dance," allied to the Tarantella. Although less pleasing in motive than that described, the wasp dance gives opportunity for movements of even superior significance—or, as one may say, suggestures. The girl stands in a pensive posture, her hands demurely clasped in front, her head poised a little on one side. Suddenly a wasp is heard to approach, and by her gestures is seen to have stung her on the breast. She then darts hither and thither in pursuit of that audacious insect, assuming all manner of provoking attitudes, until, finally, the wasp having been caught and miserably exterminated, the girl resumes her innocent smile and modest pose.

VII

JAPAN WEAR AND BOMBAY DUCKS

THROUGHOUT Asia, dancing is marked by

certain characteristics which do not greatly differ, save in degree, among the various peoples who practice it. With few exceptions, it is confined to the superior sex, and these ladies, I am sorry to confess, have not derived as great moral advantage from the monopoly as an advocate of dancing would prefer to record.

Dancing—the rhythmical movement of the limbs and body to music—is, as I have endeavored to point out, instinctive; hardly a people, savage or refined, but has certain forms of it. When, from any cause, the men abstain from its execution it has commonly not the character of grace and agility as its dominant feature, but is distinguished by soft, voluptuous movements, suggestive posturing, and all the wiles by which the performer knows she can best please the other sex; the most forthright and effective means to that commendable end being evocation of man's baser nature. The Japanese men are anti-dancers from necessity of costume, if nothing else, and the effect is much the same as elsewhere under the same conditions: the women dance, the men gloat and the gods grieve.

There are two kinds of dances in Japan: the

one not only lewd, but—to speak with accurate adjustment of word to fact—beastly; in the other grace is the dominating element, and decency as cold as a snow-storm. Of the former class, the "Chon Nookee" is the most popular. It is, however, less a dance than an exhibition, and its patrons are the wicked, the dissolute and the European. It is commonly given at some entertainment to which respectable women have not the condescension to be invited—such as a dinner party of some wealthy gentleman's gentlemen friends. The dinner—served on the floor—having been impatiently tucked away, and the candies, cakes, hot saki and other necessary addenda of a Japanese dinner brought in, the "Chon Nookee" is demanded, and with a modest demeanor, worn as becomingly as if it were their every-day habit, the performers glide in, seating themselves coyly on the floor, in two rows. Each dancing girl is appareled in such captivating bravery as her purse can buy or her charms exact. The folds of her varicolored gowns crossing her bosom makes combinations of rich, warm hues, which it were folly not to admire and peril to admire too much. The faces of these girls are in many instances exceedingly pretty, but with

that natural—and, be it humbly submitted, not very creditable—tendency of the sex to revision and correction of nature's handiwork, they plaster them with pigments dear to the sign-painter, and temper the red glory of their lips with a bronze preparation which the flattered brass-founder would no doubt deem kissable utterly. The music is made by beating a drum and twanging a kind of guitar, the musician chanting the while to an exceedingly simple air, words which, in deference to the possible prejudices of those readers who may be on terms of familarity with the Japanese language, I have deemed it proper to omit—with an apology to the Prudes for the absence of an appendix in which they might be given without offense. (I had it in mind to insert the music here, but am told by credible authority that in Japan music is moral or immoral without reference to the words that may be sung with it. So I omit—with reluctance—the score, as well as the words.)

The chanting having proceeded for a few minutes, the girls take up the song and enter spiritedly into the dance. One challenges another, and at a certain stage of the lively song with the sharp cry *"Hoi!"* makes a motion

with her hand. Failure on the part of the other instantaneously and exactly to copy this gesture entails the forfeiture of a garment, which is at once frankly removed. Cold and mechanical at the outset, the music grows spirited as the girls grow nude, and the dancers themselves become strangely excited as they warm to the work, taking, the while, generous potations of saki to assist their enthusiasm.

Let it not be supposed that in all this there is anything of passion; it is with these women nothing more that the mere mental exaltation produced by music, exercise and drink. With the spectators (I have heard) it fares somewhat otherwise.

When modesty's last rag has been discarded, the girls as if suddenly abashed at their own audacity, fly like startled fawns from the room, leaving their patrons to make a settlement with conscience and arrange the terms upon which that monitor will consent to the performance of the rest of the dance. For the dance proper—or improper—is now about to begin. If the first part seemed somewhat tropical, comparison with what follows will acquit it of that demerit. The combinations of the dance are infinitely varied, and so

long as willing witnesses remain—which, in simple justice to manly fortitude it should be added, is a good while—so long will the "Chon Nookee" present a new and unexpected phase; but it is thought expedient that no more of them be presented here, and if the reader has done me the honor to have enough of it, we will pass to the consideration of another class of dances.

Of this class those most in favor are the Fan and Umbrella dances, performed, usually, by young girls trained almost from infancy. The Japanese are passionately fond of these beautiful exhibitions of grace, and no manner of festivity is satisfactorily celebrated without them. The musicians, all girls, commonly six or eight in number, play on the guitar, a small ivory wand being used, instead of the fingers, to strike the strings. The dancer, a girl of some thirteen years, is elaborately habited as a page. Confined by the closely folded robe as by fetters, the feet and legs are not much used, the feet, indeed, never leaving the floor. Time is marked by undulations of the body, waving the arms, and deft manipulation of the fan. The supple figure bends and sways like a reed in the wind, advances and recedes, one movement succeeding another by transi-

tions singularly graceful, the arms describing innumerable curves, and the fan so skilfully handled as to seem instinct with a life and liberty of its own. Nothing more pure, more devoid of evil suggestion, can be imagined. It is a sad fact that the poor children trained to the execution of this harmless and pleasing dance are destined, in their riper years, to give their charms and graces to the service of the devil in the "Chon Nookee." The umbrella dance is similar to the one just described, the main difference being the use of a small, gaily-colored umbrella in place of the fan.

Crossing from Japan to China, the Prude will find a condition of things which, for iron severity of morals, is perhaps unparallelel—no dancing whatever, by either profligate or virtuous women. To whatever original cause we may attribute this peculiarity, it seems eternal; for the women of the upper classes have an ineradicable habit of so mutilating their feet that even the polite and comparatively harmless accomplishment of walking is beyond their power; those of the lower orders have not sense enough to dance; and that men should dance alone is a proposition of such free and forthright idiocy as to be but

obscurely conceivable to any understanding not having the gift of maniacal inspiration, or the normal advantage of original incapacity. Altogether, we may rightly consider China the heaven-appointed *habitat* of people who dislike the dance.

In Siam, what little is known of dancing is confined to the people of Laos. The women are meek-eyed, spiritless creatures, crushed under the heavy domination of the stronger sex. Naturally, their music and dancing are of a plaintive, almost doleful character, not without a certain cloying sweetness, however. The dancing is as graceful as the pudgy little bodies of the women are capable of achieving —a little more pleasing than the capering of a butcher's block, but not quite so much so as that of a wash-tub. Its greatest merit is the steely rigor of its decorum. The dancers, however, like ourselves, are a shade less appallingly proper off the floor than on it.

In no part of the world, probably, is the condition of women more consummately deplorable than in India; and, in consequence, nowhere than in the dances of that country is manifested a more simple unconsciousness or frank disregard of decency. As by nature, and according to the light that is in him, the

Hindu is indolent and licentious, so, in accurately matching degree, are the dancing girls innocent of morality, and uninfected with shame. It would be difficult more keenly to insult a respectable Hindu woman than to accuse her of having danced, while the man who should affect the society of the females justly so charged would incur the lasting detestation of his race. The dancing girls are of two orders of infamy—those who serve in the temples, and are hence called Devo-Dasi, slaves of the gods, and the Nautch girls, who dance in a secular sort for hire. Frequently a mother will make a vow to dedicate her unborn babe, if it have the obedience to be a girl, to the service of some particular god; in this way, and by the daughters born to themselves, are the ranks of the Devo-Dasi recruited. The sons of these miserable creatures are taught to play upon musical instruments for their mothers and sisters to dance by. As the ordinary Hindu woman is careless about the exposure of her charms, so these dancers take intelligent and mischievous advantage of the social situation by immodestly concealing their own. The Devo-Dasi actually go to the length of wearing clothes! Each temple has a band of eight or ten of these girls,

who celebrate their saltatory rites morning and evening. Advancing at the head of the religious procession, they move themselves in an easy and graceful manner, with gradual transition to a more sensuous and voluptuous motion, suiting their action to the religious frame of mind of the devout, until their well-rounded limbs and lithe figures express a degree of piety consonant with the purpose of the particular occasion. They attend all public ceremonies and festivals, executing their audacious dances impartially for gods and men.

The Nautch girls are purchased in infancy, and as carefully trained in their wordly way as the Devo-Dasi for the diviner function, being about equally depraved. All the large cities contain full sets of these girls, with attendant musicians, ready for hire at festivals of any kind, and by leaving orders parties are served at their residences with fidelity and dispatch. Commonly they dance two at a time, but frequently some wealthy gentleman will secure the services of a hundred or more to assist him through the day without resorting to questionable expedients of time-killing. Their dances require strict attention, from the circumstance that their feet—like those of the

immortal equestrienne of Banbury Cross—are hung with small bells, which must be made to sound in concert with the notes of the musicians. In attitude and gesture they are almost as bad as their pious sisters of the temples. The endeavor is to express the passions of love, hope, jealousy, despair, etc., and they eke out this mimicry with chanted songs in every way worthy of the movements of which they are the explanatory notes. These are the only women in Hindustan whom it is thought worth while to teach to read and write. If they would but make as noble use of their intellectual as they do of their physical education, they might perhaps produce books as moral as *The Dance of Death.*

In Persia and Asia Minor, the dances and dancers are nearly alike. In both countries the Georgian and Circassian slaves who have been taught the art of pleasing, are bought by the wealthy for their amusement and that of their wives and concubines. Some of the performances are pure in motive and modest in execution, but most of them are interesting otherwise. The beautiful young Circassian slave, clad in loose robes of diaphanous texture, takes position, castanets in hand, on a square rug, and to the music of a kind of violin

goes through the figures of her dance, her whiteness giving her an added indelicacy which the European spectator misses in the capering of her berry-brown sisters-in-sin of other climes.

The dance of the Georgian is more spirited. Her dress is a brief skirt, reaching barely to the knees, and a low-cut chemise. In her night-black hair is wreathed a bright-red scarf or string of pearls. The music, at first low and slow, increases by degrees in rapidity and volume, then falls away almost to silence, again swells and quickens, and so alternates, the motions of the dancer's willowy and obedient figure accurately according, now seeming to swim languidly, and anon her little feet having their will of her, and fluttering in mid-air like a couple of birds. She is an engaging creature; her ways are ways of pleasantness, but whether all her paths are peace depends somewhat, it is reasonable to conjecture, upon the circumspection of her daily walk and conversation when relegated to the custody of her master's wives.

In some parts of Persia the dancing of boys appareled as women is held in high favor, but exactly what wholesome human sentiment it addresses I am not prepared to say.

VIII

IN THE BOTTOM OF THE CRUCIBLE

FROM the rapid and imperfect review of certain characteristic oriental dances in the chapters immediately preceding—or rather from the studies some of whose minor results those chapters embody—I make deduction of a few significant facts, to which facts of contrary significance seem exceptional. In the first place, it is to be noted that in countries where woman is conspicuously degraded the dance is correspondingly depraved. By "the dance," I mean, of course, those characteristic and typical performances which have permanent place in the social life of the people. Amongst all nations the dance exists in certain loose and unrecognized forms, which are the outgrowth of the moment—creatures of caprice, posing and pranking their brief and inglorious season, to be superseded by some newer favorite, born of some newer accident or fancy. A fair type of these ephemeral dances—the comets of the saltatory system—in so far as they can have a type, is the now familiar *Can-Can* of the Jardin Mabille—a dance the capt-

ivating naughtiness of which has given it wide currency in our generation, the successors to whose aged rakes and broken bawds it will fail to please and would probably make unhappy. Dances of this character, neither national, universal, nor enduring, have little value to the student of anything but anatomy and lingerie. By study of a thousand, the product of as many years, it might be possible to trace the thread upon which such beads are strung—indeed, it is pretty obvious without research; but considered singly they have nothing of profit to the investigator, who will do well to contemplate without reflection or perform without question, as the bent of his mind may be observant or experimental.

Dancing, then, is indelicate where the women are depraved; and to this it must be added that the women are depraved where the men are indolent. We need not trouble ourselves to consider too curiously as to cause and effect. Whether in countries where man is too lazy to be manly, woman practices deferential adjustment of her virtues to the loose exactions of his tolerance, or whether for ladies of indifferent modesty their lords will not make exertion—these are questions for the ethnologer. It concerns our purpose only to

note that the male who sits cross-legged on a rug and permits his female to do the dancing for both gets a quality distinctly inferior to that enjoyed by his more energetic brother, willing himself to take a leg at the game. Doubtless the lazy fellow prefers the loose gamboling of nude girls to the decent grace and moderation of a better art; but this, I submit, is an error of taste resulting from imperfect instruction.

And here we are confronted with the ever-recurrent question: Is dancing immoral? The reader who has done me the honor attentively to consider the brief descriptions of certain dances hereinbefore presented will, it is believed, be now prepared to answer that some sorts of dancing indubitably are—a bright and shining example of the type being the exploit wherein women alone perform and men alone admire. But one of the arguments by which it is sought to prove dancing immoral in itself —namely, that it provokes evil passions—we are now able to analyze with the necessary discrimination, assigning to it its just weight, and tracing its real bearing on the question. Dances like those described (with, I hope a certain delicacy and reticence) are undoubtedly disturbing to the spectator. They have

in that circumstance their *raison d'être*. As to that, then, there can be no two opinions. But observe: the male oriental voluptuary does not himself dance. Why? Partly, no doubt, because of his immortal indolence, but mainly, I venture to think, because he wishes to enjoy his reprehensible emotion, and this can not coëxist with muscular activity. If the reader—through either immunity from improper emotion or unfamiliarity with muscular activity—entertains a doubt of this, his family physician will be happy to remove it. Nothing is more certain than that the dancing girls of oriental countries themselves feel nothing of what they have the skill to simulate; and the ballet-dancer of our own stage is icily unconcerned while kicking together the smouldering embers in the heart of the wigged and corseted old beau below her, and playing the duse's delight with the disobedient imagination of the he Prude posted in the nooks and shadows thoughtfully provided for him. Stendahl frankly informs us: "I have had much experience with the *danseuses* of the——Theatre at Valence. I am convinced that they are, for the most part, very chaste. It is because their occupation is too fatiguing."

The same author, by the way, says elsewhere:

I would wish, if I were legislator, that they should adopt in France, as in Germany, the custom of *soirées dansantes*. Four times a month the young girls go with their mothers to a ball, beginning at seven o'clock, ending at midnight, and requiring, for all expense, a violin and some glasses of water. In an adjacent room, the mothers, perhaps a little jealous of the happy education of their daughters, play at cards; in a third, the fathers find the newspapers and talk politics. Between midnight and one o'clock all the family are reunited and have regained the paternal roof. The young girls learn to know the young men; the fatuity, and the indiscretion that follows it, become quickly odious; in a word, they learn how to choose a husband. Some young girls have unfortunate love affairs, but the number of deceived husbands and unhappy households (*mauvaises ménages*) diminishes in immense proportion.

For an iron education in cold virtue there is no school like the position of sitting-master to the wall-flowers at a church-sociable; but it is humbly conjectured that even the austere morality of a bald-headed Prude might receive an added iciness if he would but attend one of these simple dancing-bouts disguised as a sweet young girl.

IX

COUNSEL FOR THE DEFENSE

NEARLY all the great writers of antiquity and of the medieval period who have mentioned dancing at all have done so in terms of unmistakable favor; of modern famous authors, they only have condemned it from whose work, or from what is known of their personal character, we may justly infer an equal aversion to pretty much everything in the way of pleasure that a Christian needs not die in order to enjoy. English literature—I use the word in its noble sense, to exclude all manner of preaching, whether clerical or lay—is full of the dance; the sound of merry-makers footing it featly to the music runs like an undertone through all the variations of its theme and fills all its pauses.

In the "Miller's Tale," Chaucer mentions dancing among the accomplishments of the parish clerk, along with blood-letting and the drawing of legal documents:

> A merry child he was, so God me save;
> Wel coud he leten blood and clippe and shave,
> And make a chartre of land, and a quitance;

In twenty maners could he trip and dance,
After the scole of Oxenforde tho,
And with his legges casten to and fro.*

*On this passage Tyrwhit makes the following judicious comment: "The school of Oxford seems to have been in much the same estimation for its dancing as that of Stratford for its French"—alluding, of course, to what is said in the Prologue, of the French spoken by the Prioress:

And French she spoke, full fayre and fetisly,
After the scole of Stratford-atte-bowe,
For French of Paris was to hire unknowe.

Milton, the greatest of the Puritans—intellectual ancestry of the modern degenerate Prudes—had a wholesome love of the dance, and nowhere is his pen so joyous as in its description in the well-known passage from "Comus" which, should it occur to my memory while delivering a funeral oration, I am sure I could not forbear to quote, albeit this, our present argument, is but little furthered by its context:

Meanwhile welcome joy and feast,
Midnight shout and revelry,
Tipsy dance and jollity.
Braid your locks with rosy twine,

Dropping odors, dropping wine,
Rigor now is gone to bed,
And advice, with scrupulous head,
Strict age and sour severity,
With their grave saws in slumber lie.
We, that are of purer fire,
Imitate the starry quire,
Who, in their nightly watching spheres,
Lead in swift round the months and years.
The sounds and seas with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;
And on the tawny sands and shelves,
Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves.

If Milton was not himself a good dancer—and as to that point my memory is unstored with instance or authority—it will at least be conceded that he was an admirable reporter, with his heart in the business. Somewhat to lessen the force of the objection that he puts the foregoing lines into a not very respectable mouth, on a not altogether reputable occasion, I append the following passage from the same poem, supposed to be spoken by the good spirit who had brought a lady and her two brothers through many perils, restoring them to their parents:

Noble lord and lady bright,
I have brought ye new delight:

Here behold, so goodly grown,
Three fair branches of your own.
Heaven hath timely tried their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And sent them here through hard assays
With a crown of deathless praise,
To triumph in victorious dance,
O'er sensual folly and intemperance.

The lines on dancing—lines which themselves dance—in "L'Allegro," are too familiar; I dare not permit myself the enjoyment of quotation.

Lord Herbert of Cherbury, one of the most finished gentlemen of his time otherwise, laments in his autobiography that he had never learned to dance, because that accomplishment "doth fashion the body, and gives one a good presence and address in all companies, since it disposeth the limbs to a kind of *souplesse* (as the French call it) and agility, insomuch as they seem to have the use of their legs, arms, and bodies more than many others who, standing stiff and stark in their postures, seem as if they were taken in their joints, or had not the perfect use of their members." Altogether, a very grave objection to dancing, in the opinion of those who discounten-

ance it, and I take great credit for candor in presenting his lordship's indictment.

In the following pertinent passage from Lemontey I do not remember the opinion he quotes from Locke, but his own is sufficiently to the point:

> The dance is for young women what the chase is for young men; a protecting school of wisdom—a preservative of the growing passions. The celebrated Locke, who made virtue the sole end of education, expressly recommends teaching children to dance as early as they are able to learn. Dancing carries within itself an eminently cooling quality, and all over the world the tempests of the heart await, to break forth, the repose of the limbs.

In "The Traveller," Goldsmith says:

> Alike all ages; dames of ancient days
> Have led their children through the mirthful maze,
> And the gay grandsire, skilled in gestic lore,
> Has frisked beneath the burden of three score.

To the Prudes, in all soberness—Is it likely, considering the stubborn conservatism of age, that these dames, well-seasoned in the habit, will leave it off directly, or the impenitent old grandsire abate one jot or tittle of his friskiness in the near future? Is it a reasonable

hope? Is the outlook from the watch-towers of Philistia an encouraging one?

X

THEY ALL DANCE

Fountains dance down to the river,
  Rivers to the ocean,
Summer leaflets dance and quiver
  To the breeze's motion.
Nothing in the world is single—
  All things, by a simple rule,
Nods and steps and graces mingle
  As at dancing-school.

See, the shadows on the mountain
  Pirouette with one another;
See, the leaf upon the fountain
  Dances with its leaflet brother.
See, the moonlight on the earth,
  Flecking forest, gleam and glance!
What are all these dancings worth
  If I may not dance?

—*After Shelley.*

Dance? Why not? The dance is natural, it is innocent, wholesome, enjoyable. It has the sanction of religion, philosophy, science. It is approved by the sacred writings of all

ages and nations—of Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam; of Zoroaster and Confucius. Not an altar, from Jupiter to Jesus, around which the votaries have not danced with religious zeal and indubitable profit to mind and body. Fire-worshipers of Persia and Peru danced about the visible sign and manifestation to their deity. Dervishes dance in frenzy, and the Shakers jump up and come down hard through excess of the Spirit. All the gods have danced with all the goddesses—round dances, too. The lively divinities created by the Greeks in their own image danced divinely, as became them. Old Thor stormed and thundered down the icy halls of the Scandinavian mythology to the music of runic rhymes, and the souls of slain heroes in Valhalla take to their toes in celebration of their valorous deeds done in the body upon the bodies of their enemies. Angels dance before the Great White Throne to harps attuned by angel hands, and the Master of the Revels —who arranges the music of the spheres—looks approvingly on. Dancing is of divine institution.

The elves and fairies "dance delicate measures" in the light of the moon and stars. The troll dances his gruesome jig on lonely hills:

the gnome executes his little pigeon-wing in the obscure subterrene by the glimmer of a diamond. Nature's untaught children dance in wood and glade, stimulated of leg by the sunshine with which they are soaken top-full —the same quickening emanation that inspires the growing tree and upheaves the hill. And, if I err not, there is sound Scripture for the belief that these self-same eminences have capacity to skip for joy. The peasant dances —a trifle clumsily—at harvest feast when the grain is garnered. The stars in heaven dance visibly; the firefly dances in emulation of the stars. The sunshine dances on the waters. The humming-bird and the bee dance about the flowers, which dance to the breeze. The innocent lamb, type of the White Christ, dances on the green; and the matronly cow perpetrates an occasional stiff enormity when she fancies herself unobserved. All the sportive rollickings of all the animals, from the agile fawn to the unwieldly behemoth, are dances taught them by nature.

I am not here making an argument for dancing; I only assert its goodness, confessing its abuse. We do not argue the wholesomeness of sunshine and cold water; we assert it, admitting that sunstroke is mischievous and that

copious potations of freezing water will founder a superheated horse, and urge the hot blood to the head of an imprudent man similarly prepared, killing him, as is right. We do not build syllogisms to prove that grains and fruits of the earth are of God's best bounty to man; we allow that bad whisky may—with difficulty—be distilled from rye to spoil the toper's nose, and that hydrocyanic acid can be got out of the bloomy peach. It were folly to prove that Science and Invention are our very good friends, yet the sapper who has had the misfortune to be blown to rags by the mine he was preparing for his enemy will not deny that gunpowder has aptitudes of mischief; and from the point of view of a nigger ordered upon the safety-valve of a racing steamboat, the vapor of water is a thing accurst. Shall we condemn music because the lute makes "lascivious pleasing?" Or poetry because some amorous bard tells in warm rhyme the story of the passions, and Swinburne has had the goodness to make vice offensive with his hymns in its praise? Or sculpture because from the guiltless marble may be wrought a drunken Silenus or a lechering satyr?—painting because the untamed fancies of a painter sometimes break

tether and run riot on his canvas? Because the orator may provoke the wild passions of the mob, shall there be no more public speaking?—no further acting because the actor may be pleased to saw the air, or the actress display her ultimate inch of leg? Shall we upset the pulpit because poor dear Mr. Tilton had a prettier wife than poor, dear Mr. Beecher? The bench had its Jeffrey, yet it is necessary that we have the deliveries of judgment between ourselves and the litigious. The medical profession has nursed poisoners enough to have baned all the rats of christendom; but the resolute patient must still have his prescription—if he die for it. Shall we disband our armies because in the hand of an ambitious madman a field-marshal's baton may brain a helpless State?—our navies because in ships pirates have "sailed the seas over?" Let us not commit the vulgarity of condemning the dance because of its possibilities of perversion by the vicious and the profligate. Let us not utter us in hot bosh and baking nonsense, but cleave to reason and the sweet sense of things.

Dancing never made a good girl bad, nor turned a wholesome young man to evil ways. "Opportunity!" simpers the tedious virgin

past the wall-flower of her youth. "Opportunity!" cackles the *blasé* beau who has outlasted his legs and gone deaconing in a church.

Opportunity, indeed! There is opportunity in church and school-room, in social intercourse. There is opportunity in libraries, art-galleries, picnics, street-cars, Bible-classes and at fairs and matinées. Opportunity—rare, delicious opportunity, not innocently to be ignored—in moonlight rambles by still streams. Opportunity, such as it is, behind the old gentleman's turned back, and beneath the good mother's spectacled nose. You shall sooner draw out leviathan with a hook, or bind Arcturus and his sons, than baffle the upthrust of Opportunity's many heads. Opportunity is a veritable Hydra, Argus and Briareus rolled into one. He has a hundred heads to plan his poachings, a hundred eyes to spy the land, a hundred hands to set his snares and springes. In the country where young girls are habitually unattended in the street; where the function of chaperon is commonly, and, it should be added, intelligently performed by some capable young male; where the young women receive evening calls from young men concerning whose presence in the parlor mamma in the nursery and papa at the "office"

—poor, overworked papa!—give themselves precious little trouble,—this prate of ball-room opportunity is singularly and engagingly idiotic. The worthy people who hold such language may justly boast themselves superior to reason and impregnable to light. The only effective reply to these creatures would be a cuffing; the well-meant objections of another class merit the refutation of distinct characterization. It is the old talk of devotees about sin, of topers concerning water, temperance men of gin; and, albeit it is neither wise nor witty, it is becoming in us at whom they rail to deal mercifully with them. In some otherwise estimable souls one of these harmless brain-cracks may be a right lovable trait of character.

Issues of a social import as great as a raid against dancing have been raised ere now. Will the coming man smoke? Will the coming man drink wine? These tremendous and imperative problems only recently agitated some of the "thoughtful minds" in our midst. By degrees they lost their preëminence; they were seen to be in process of solution without social cataclysm; they have, in a manner, been referred for disposal to the coming man himself: that is to say, they have been dropped,

and are to-day as dead as Julius Cæsar. The present hour has, in its turn, produced its own awful problem: Will the coming woman waltz?

As a question of mere fact the answer is patent: She will. Dancing will be good for her; she will like it; so she is going to waltz. But the question may rather be put—to borrow phraseology current among her critics: Had she oughter?—from a moral point of view, now. From a moral point, then, let us seek from analogy some light on the question of what, from its actual, practical bearings, may be dignified by the name Conundrum.

Ought a man not to smoke?—from a moral point of view. The economical view-point, the view-point of convenience, and all the rest of them, are not now in question; the simple question is: Is it immoral to smoke? And again—still from the moral point of view: Is it immoral to drink wine? Is it immoral to play at cards?—to visit theaters? (In Boston you go to some

harmless "Museum,"
Where folks who like plays may religiously see 'em.)

Finally, then—and always from the same

elevated view-point: Is it immoral to waltz?

The suggestions here started will not be further pursued in this place. It is quite pertinent now to note that we do smoke because we like it; and do drink wine because we like it; and do waltz because we like it, and have the added consciousness that it is a duty. I am sorry for a fellow-creature—male—who knows not the comfort of a cigar; sorry and concerned for him who is innocent of the knowledge of good and evil that lurk respectively in Chambertin and cheap "claret." Nor is my compassion altogether free from a sense of superiority to the object of it—superiority untainted, howbeit, by truculence. I perceive that life has been bestowed upon him for purposes inscrutable to me, though dimly hinting its own justification as a warning or awful example. So, too, of the men and women—"beings erect, and walking upon two [uneducated] legs"—whose unsophisticated toes have never, inspired by the rosy, threaded the labyrinth of the mazy ere courting the kindly offices of the balmy. It is only human to grieve for them, poor things!

But if their throbbing bunions, encased in clumsy high-lows, be obtruded to trip us in our dance, shall we not stamp on them? Yea,

verily, while we have a heel to crunch with and a leg to grind it home.

XI

LUST, QUOTH'A!

YOU have danced? Ah, good. You have waltzed? Better. You have felt the hot blood hound through your veins, as your beautiful partner, compliant to the lightest pressure of your finger-tips, her breath responsive, matched her every motion with yours? Best of all—for you have served in the temple—you are of the priesthood of manhood. You cannot misunderstand, you will not deliver false oracle.

Do you remember your first waltz with the lovely woman whom you had longed like a man but feared like a boy to touch—even so much as the hem of her garment? Can you recall the time, place and circumstance? Has not the very first bar of the music that whirled you away been singing itself in your memory ever since? Do you recall the face you then looked into, the eyes that seemed deeper than a mountain tarn, the figure that you clasped,

the beating of the heart, the warm breath that mingled with your own? Can you faintly, as in a dream—*blasé* old dancer that you are—invoke a reminiscence of the delirium that stormed your soul, expelling the dull demon in possession? Was it lust, as the Prudes aver—the poor dear Prudes, with the feel of the cold wall familiar to the leathery backs of them?

It was the gratification—the decent, honorable, legal gratification—of the passion for rhythm; the unconditional surrender to the supreme law of periodicity, under conditions of exact observance by all external things. The notes of the music repeat and supplement each other; the lights burn with answering flame at sequent distances; the walls, the windows, doors, mouldings, frescoes, iterate their lines, their levels, and panels, interminable of combination and similarity; the inlaid floor matches its angles, multiplies its figures, does over again at this point what it did at that; the groups of dancers deploy in couples, aggregate in groups, and again deploy, evoking endless resemblances. And all this rhythm and recurrence, borne in upon the brain—itself rhythmic—through intermittent senses, is converted into motion, and the mind,

yielding utterly to its environment, knows the happiness of faith, the ecstasy of compliance, the rapture of congruity. And this the dull dunces—the eyeless, earless, brainless and bloodless callosites of cavil—are pleased to call lust!

O ye, who teach the ingenuous youth of nations
  The Boston Dip, the German and the Glide,
I pray you guard them upon all occasions
  From contact of the palpitating side;
Requiring that their virtuous gyrations
  Shall interpose a space a furlong wide
Between the partners, lest their thoughts grow lewd—
So shall we satisfy the exacting Prude.

—Israfel Brown.

XII

OUR GRANDMOTHERS' LEGS

IT IS depressing to realize how little most of us know of the dancing of our ancestors. I would give value to behold the execution of a coranto and inspect the steps of a cinque-pace, having assurance that the performances assuming these names were veritably identical with their memorable originals. We possess

the means of verifying somewhat as to the nature of the minuet; but after what fashion did our revered grandfather do his rigadoon and his gavot? What manner of thing was that pirouet in the deft execution of which he felt an honest exultation? And what were the steps of his contra (or country) and Cossack dances? What tune was that—"The Devil amongst the Fiddlers"—for which he clamored, to inspire his feats of leg?

In our fathers' time we read:

> I wore my blue coat and brass buttons, very high in the neck, short in the waist and sleeves, nankeen trousers and white silk stockings, and a white waistcoat. I performed all the steps accurately and with great agility.

Which, it appears, gained the attention of the company. And it well might, for the year was 1830, and the mode of performing the cotillion of the period was undergoing the metamorphosis of which the perfect development has been familiar to ourselves. In its next stage the male celebrant is represented to us as "hopping about with a face expressive of intense solemnity, dancing as if a quadrille" —mark the newer word—"were not a thing to be laughed at, but a severe trial to the feelings." There is a smack of ancient history

about this, too; it lurks in the word "hopping." In the perfected development of this dance as known to ourselves, no stress of caricature would describe the movement as a hopping. But our grandfather not only hopped, he did more. He sprang from the floor and quivered. In midair he crossed his feet twice and even three times, before alighting. And our budding grandmother beheld, and experienced flutterings of the bosom at his manly achievements. Some memory of these feats survived in the performances of the male ballet-dancers—a breed now happily extinct. A fine old lady—she lives, aged eighty-two—showed me once the exercise of "setting to your partner," performed in her youth; and truly it was right marvelous. She literally bounced hither and thither, effecting a twisting in and out of the feet, a patting and a flickering of the toes incredibly intricate. For the celebration of these rites her partner would array himself in morocco pumps with cunningly contrived buckles of silver, silk stockings, salmon-colored silk breeches tied with abundance of riband, exuberant frills, or "chitterlings," which puffed out at the neck and bosom not unlike the wattles of a he-turkey; and under his arms—as the fowl

roasted might have carried its gizzard—our grandfather pressed the flattened simulacrum of a cocked hat. At this interval of time charity requires us to drop over the lady's own costume a veil that, tried by our canons of propriety, it sadly needed. She was young and thoughtless, the good grandmother; she was conscious of the posession of charms and concealed them not.

To the setting of these costumes, manners and practices, there was imported from Germany a dance called Waltz, which as I conceive, was the first of our "round" dances. It was welcomed by most persons who could dance, and by some superior souls who could not. Among the latter, the late Lord Byron—whose participation in the dance was barred by an unhappy physical disability—addressed the new-comer in characteristic verse. Some of the lines in this ingenious nobleman's apostrophe are not altogether intelligible, when applied to any dance that we know by the name of waltz. For example:

Pleased round the chalky floor, how well they trip,
One hand* reposing on the royal hip,
The other to the shoulder no less royal
Ascending with affection truly loyal.

I.e. one of the lady's hands.

These lines imply an attitude unknown to contemporary waltzers, but the description involves no poetic license. Our dear grandmothers (giddy, giddy girls!) did their waltz that way. Let me quote:

> The lady takes the gentleman round the neck with one arm, resting against his shoulder. During the motion, the dancers are continually changing their relative situations: now the gentleman brings his arm about the lady's neck, and the lady takes him round the waist.

At another point, the lady may "lean gently on his shoulder," their arms (as it appears) "entwining." This description is by an eye-witness, whose observation is taken, not at the rather debauched court of the Prince Regent, but at the simple republican assemblies of New York. The observer is the gentle Irving, writing in 1807. Occasional noteworthy experiences they must have had—those modest, blooming grandmothers—for, it is to be borne in mind, tipsiness was rather usual with dancing gentlemen in the fine old days of Port and Madeira; and the blithe, white-armed grandmothers themselves did sip their punch, to a man. However, we may forbear criticism. We, at least, owe nothing but reverent gratitude to a generation from which

we derive life, waltzing and the memory of Madeira. Even when read, as it needs should be read, in the light of that prose description of the dance to which it was addressed, Lord Byron's welcome to the waltz will be recognized as one more illustration of a set of hoary and moss-grown truths.

> As parlor-soldiers, graced with fancy-scars,
> Rehearse their bravery in imagined wars;
> As paupers, gathered in congenial flocks,
> Babble of banks, insurances, and stocks;
> As each if oft'nest eloquent of what
> He hates or covets, but possesses not;
> As cowards talk of pluck; misers of waste;
> Scoundrels of honor; country clowns of taste;
> Ladies of logic; devotees of sin;
> Topers of water; temperance men of gin—

my lord Byron sang of waltzing. Let us forgive and—remembering his poor foot—pity him. Yet the opinions of famous persons possess an interest that is akin, in the minds of many plain folk, to weight. Let us, then, incline an ear to another: "Laura was fond of waltzing, as every brisk and innocent young girl should be," wrote he than who none has written more nobly in our time—he who "could appreciate good women and describe them; and draw them more truly than any

novelist in the language, except Miss Austen." The same sentiment with reference to dancing appears in many places in his immortal pages. In his younger days as *attaché* of legation in Germany, Mr. Thackeray became a practiced waltzer. As a censor he thus possesses over Lord Byron whatever advantage may accrue from knowledge of the subject whereof he wrote.

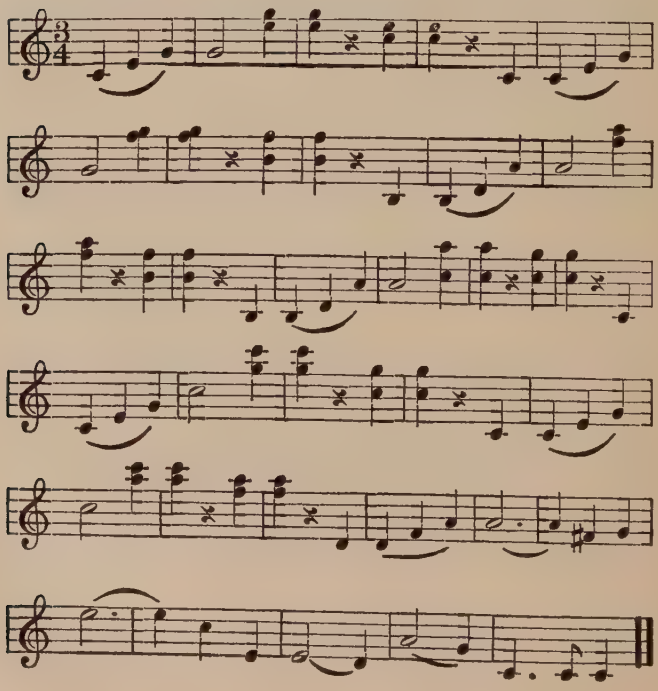
We are happily not called upon to institute a comparison of character between the two distinguished moralists, though the same, drawn masterly, might not be devoid of entertainment and instruction. But two or three other points of distinction should be kept in mind as having sensible relation to the question of competency to bear witness. Byron wrote of the women of a corrupted court; Thackeray of the women of that society indicated by the phrase "Persons whom one meets" —and meets *now*. Byron wrote of an obsolete dance, described by Irving in terms of decided strength; Thackeray wrote of our own waltz. In turning off his brilliant and witty verses it is unlikely that any care as to their truthfulness disturbed the glassy copiousness of the Byronic utterance; this child of nature did never consider too curiously of justice,

moderation and such inventions of the schools. The key-note of all the other wrote is given by his faithful pen when it avers that it never "signed the page that registered a lie." Byron was a "gentleman of wit and pleasure about town"; Thackeray the father of daughters. However, all this is perhaps little to the purpose. We owe no trifling debt to Lord Byron for his sparkling and spirited lines, and by no good dancer would they be "willingly let die." Poetry, music, dancing —they are one art. The muses are sisters, yet they do not quarrel. Of a truth, even as was Laura, so every brisk and innocent young girl should be. And it is safe to predict that she will be. If she would enjoy the advantage of belonging to Our Set she must be.

As a rule, the ideas of the folk who cherish a prejudice against dancing are crude rather than unclean—the outcome much more of ignorance than salacity. Of course there are exceptions. In my great work on The Prude all will be attended to with due discrimination in apportionment of censure. At present the spirit of the dance makes merry with my pen, for from yonder "stately pleasure-dome" (decreed by one Kubla Khan, formerly of The Big Bonanza Mining Company) the

strains of the *Blue Danube* float out upon the night. Avaunt, miscreants! lest we chase ye with flying feet and do our little dance upon your unwholesome carcasses. Already the toes of our partners begin to twiddle beneath their petticoats. Come, then, Stoopid—can't you move? No!—they change it to a galop —and eke the good old Sturm. Firm and steady, now, fair partner mine, whiles we run that *gobemouche* down and trample him miserably. There: light and softly again—the servants will remove the remains.

And hark! that witching strain once more:



EPIGRAMS

EPIGRAMS

If every hypocrite in the United States were to break his leg to-day the country could be successfully invaded to-morrow by the warlike hypocrites of Canada.

To Dogmatism the Spirit of Inquiry is the same as the Spirit of Evil, and to pictures of the latter it appends a tail to represent the note of interrogation.

"Immoral" is the judgment of the stalled ox on the gamboling lamb.

In forgiving an injury be somewhat ceremonious, lest your magnanimity be construed as indifference.

True, man does not know woman. But neither does woman.

Age is provident because the less future we have the more we fear it.

Reason is fallible and virtue vincible; the winds vary and the needle forsakes the pole, but stupidity never errs and never intermits. Since it has been found that the axis of the

earth wabbles, stupidity is indispensable as a standard of constancy.

In order that the list of able women may be memorized for use at meetings of the oppressed sex, Heaven has considerately made it brief.

Firmness is my persistency; obstinacy is yours.

A little heap of dust,
A little streak of rust,
A stone without a name—
Lo! hero, sword and fame.

Our vocabulary is defective; we give the same name to woman's lack of temptation and man's lack of opportunity.

"You scoundrel, you have wronged me," hissed the philosopher. "May you live forever!"

The man who thinks that a garnet can be made a ruby by setting it in brass is writing "dialect" for publication.

"Who art thou, stranger, and what dost thou seek?"

"I am Generosity, and I seek a person named Gratitude."

"Then thou dost not deserve to find her."

"True. I will go about my business and think of her no more. But who art thou, to be so wise?"

"I am Gratitude—farewell forever."

There was never a genius who was not thought a fool until he disclosed himself; whereas he is a fool then only.

The boundaries that Napoleon drew have been effaced; the kingdoms that he set up have disappeared. But all the armies and statecraft of Europe cannot unsay what you have said.

Strive not for singularity in dress;
Fools have the more and men of sense the less.
To look original is not worth while,
But be in mind a little out of style.

A conqueror arose from the dead. "Yesterday," he said, "I ruled half the world." "Please show me the half that you ruled," said an angel, pointing out a wisp of glowing vapor floating in space. "That is the world."

"Who art thou, shivering in thy furs?"
"My name is Avarice. What is thine?"
"Unselfishness."

"Where is thy clothing, placid one?"
"Thou art wearing it."

To be comic is merely to be playful, but wit is a serious matter. To laugh at it is to confess that you do not understand.

If you would be accounted great by your contemporaries, be not too much greater than they.

To have something that he will not desire, nor know that he has—such is the hope of him who seeks the admiration of posterity. The character of his work does not matter; he is a humorist.

Women and foxes, being weak, are distinguished by superior tact.

To fatten pigs, confine and feed them; to fatten rogues, cultivate a generous disposition.

Every heart is the lair of a ferocious animal. The greatest wrong that you can put upon a man is to provoke him to let out his beast.

When two irreconcilable propositions are presented for assent the safest way is to thank Heaven that we are not as the unreasoning brutes, and believe both.

Truth is more deceptive than falsehood, for it is more frequently presented by those from whom we do not expect it, and so has against it a numerical presumption.

A bad marriage is like an electrical thrilling machine: it makes you dance, but you can't let go.

Meeting Merit on a street-crossing, Success stood still. Merit stepped off into the mud and went round him, bowing his apologies, which Success had the grace to accept.

"I think," says the philosopher divine,
"Therefore I am." Sir, here's a surer sign:
We know we live, for with our every breath
We feel the fear and imminence of death.

The first man you meet is a fool. If you do not think so ask him and he will prove it.

He who would rather inflict injustice than suffer it will always have his choice, for no injustice can be done to him.

There are as many conceptions of a perfect happiness hereafter as there are minds that have marred their happiness here.

We yearn to be, not what we are, but what

we are not. If we were immortal we should not crave immortality.

A rabbit's foot may bring good luck to you, but it brought none to the rabbit.

Before praising the wisdom of the man who knows how to hold his tongue ascertain if he knows how to hold his pen.

The most charming view in the world is obtained by introspection.

Love is unlike chess, in that the pieces are moved secretly and the player sees most of the game. But the looker-on has one incomparable advantage: he is not the stake.

It is not for nothing that tigers choose to hide in the jungle, for commerce and trade are carried on, mostly, in the open.

We say that we love, not whom we will, but whom we must. Our judgment need not, therefore, go to confession.

Of two kinds of temporary insanity, one ends in suicide, the other in marriage.

If you give alms from compassion, why require the beneficiary to be "a deserving object"? No other adversity is so sharp as destitution of merit.

Bereavement is the name that selfishness gives to a particular privation.

O proud philanthropist, your hope is vain
To get by giving what you lost by gain.
With every gift you do but swell the cloud
Of witnesses against you, swift and loud—
Accomplices who turn and swear you split
Your life: half robber and half hypocrite.
You're least unsafe when most intact you hold
Your curst allotment of dishonest gold.

The highest and rarest form of contentment is approval of the success of another.

If Inclination challenge, stand and fight—
From Opportunity the wise take flight.

What a woman most admires in a man is distinction among men. What a man most admires in a woman is devotion to himself.

Those who most loudly invite God's attention to themselves when in peril of death are those who should most fervently wish to escape his observation.

When you have made a catalogue of your friend's faults it is only fair to supply him with a duplicate, so that he may know yours.

How fascinating is Antiquity!—in what a

golden haze the ancients lived their lives! We, too, are ancients. Of our enchanting time Posterity's great poets will sing immortal songs, and its archæologists will reverently uncover the foundations of our palaces and temples. Meantime we swap jackknives.

Observe, my son, with how austere a virtue the man without a cent puts aside the temptation to manipulate the market or acquire a monopoly.

For study of the good and the bad in woman two women are a needless expense.

"There's no free will," says the philosopher;
"To hang is most unjust."
"There is no free will," assents the officer;
"We hang because we must."

Hope is an explorer who surveys the country ahead. That is why we know so much about the Hereafter and so little about the Heretofore.

Remembering that it was a woman who lost the world, we should accept the act of cackling geese in saving Rome as partial reparation.

There are two classes of women who may

do as they please; those who are rich and those who are poor. The former can count on assent, the latter on inattention.

When into the house of the heart Curiosity is admitted as the guest of Love she turns her host out of doors.

Happiness has not to all the same name: to Youth she is known as the Future; Age knows her as the Dream.

"Who art thou, there in the mire?"

"Intuition. I leaped all the way from where thou standest in fear on the brink of the bog."

"A great feat, madam; accept the admiration of Reason, sometimes known as Dryfoot."

In eradicating an evil, it makes a difference whether it is uprooted or rooted up. The difference is in the reformer.

The Audible Sisterhood rightly affirms the equality of the sexes: no man is so base but some woman is base enough to love him.

Having no eyes in the back of the head, we see ourselves on the verge of the outlook. Only he who has accomplished the notable

feat of turning about knows himself the central figure in the universe.

Truth is so good a thing that falsehood can not afford to be without it.

If women did the writing of the world, instead of the talking, men would be regarded as the superior sex in beauty, grace and goodness.

Love is a delightful day's journey. At the farther end kiss your companion and say farewell.

Let him who would wish to duplicate his every experience prate of the value of life.

The game of discontent has its rules, and he who disregards them cheats. It is not permitted to you to wish to add another's advantages or possessions to your own; you are permitted only to wish to be another.

The creator and arbiter of beauty is the heart; to the male rattlesnake the female rattlesnake is the loveliest thing in nature.

Thought and emotion dwell apart. When the heart goes into the head there is no dissension; only an eviction.

If you want to read a perfect book there is only one way: write it.

"Where goest thou, Ignorance?"

"To fortify the mind of a maiden against a peril."

"I am going thy way. My name is Knowledge."

"Scoundrel! Thou art the peril."

A prude is one who blushes modestly at the indelicacy of her thoughts and virtuously flies from the temptation of her desires.

The man who is always taking you by the hand is the same who if you were hungry would take you by the café.

When a certain sovereign wanted war he threw out a diplomatic intimation; when ready, a diplomat.

If public opinion were determined by a throw of the dice, it would in the long run be half the time right.

The gambling known as business looks with austere disfavor upon the business known as gambling.

A virtuous widow is the most loyal of mortals; she is faithful to that which is neither pleased nor profited by her fidelity.

Of one who was "foolish" the creators of our language said that he was "fond." That we have not definitely reversed the meanings of the words should be set down to the credit of our courtesy.

Rioting gains its end by the power of numbers. To a believer in the wisdom and goodness of majorities it is not permitted to denounce a successful mob.

Artistically set to grace
The wall of a dissecting-place,
A human pericardium
Was fastened with a bit of gum,
While, simply underrunning it,
The one word, "Charity," was writ
To show the student band that hovered
About it what it once had covered.

Virtue is not necessary to a good reputation, but a good reputation is helpful to virtue.

When lost in a forest go always down hill. When lost in a philosophy or doctrine go upward.

We submit to the majority because we have to. But we are not compelled to call our attitude of subjection a posture of respect.

Pascal says that an inch added to the length of Cleopatra's nose would have changed the fortunes of the world. But having said this, he has said nothing, for all the forces of nature and all the power of dynasties could not have added an inch to the length of Cleopatra's nose.

Our luxuries are always masquerading as necessaries. Woman is the only necessary having the boldness and address to compel recognition as a luxury.

"I am the seat of the affections," said the heart.

"Thank you," said the judgment, "you save my face."

"Who art thou that weepest?"

"Man."

"Nay, thou art Egotism. I am the Scheme of the Universe. Study me and learn that nothing matters."

"Then how does it matter that I weep?"

A slight is less easily forgiven than an injury, because it implies something of contempt, indifference, an overlooking of our importance; whereas an injury presupposes some degree of consideration. "The black-

guards!" said a traveler whom Sicilian brigands had released without ransom; "did they think me a person of no consequence?"

The people's plaudits are unheard in hell.

Generosity to a fallen foe is a virtue that takes no chances.

If there was a world before this we must all have died impenitent.

We are what we laugh at. The stupid person is a poor joke, the clever, a good one.

If every man who resents being called a rogue resented being one this would be a world of wrath.

Force and charm are important elements of character, but it counts for little to be stronger than honey and sweeter than a lion.

Grief and discomfiture are coals that cool:
Why keep them glowing with thy sighs,
poor fool?

A popular author is one who writes what the people think. Genius invites them to think something else.

Asked to describe the Deity, a donkey would represent him with long ears and a

tail. Man's conception is higher and truer: he thinks of him as somewhat resembling a man.

Christians and camels receive their burdens kneeling.

The sky is a concave mirror in which Man sees his own distorted image and seeks to propitiate it.

Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land, but do not hope that the life insurance companies will offer thee special rates.

Persons who are horrified by what they believe to be Darwin's theory of the descent of Man from the Ape may find comfort in the hope of his return.

A strong mind is more easily impressed than a weak: you shall not so readily convince a fool that you are a philosopher as a philosopher that you are a fool.

A cheap and easy cynicism rails at everything. The master of the art accomplishes the formidable task of discrimination.

When publicly censured our first instinct is to make everybody a codefendant.

O lady fine, fear not to lead
To Hymen's shrine a clown:
Love cannot level up, indeed,
But he can level down.

Men are polygamous by nature and monogamous for opportunity. It is a faithful man who is willing to be watched by a half-dozen wives.

The virtues chose Modesty to be their queen.

"I did not know that I was a virtue," she said. "Why did you not choose Innocence?"

"Because of her ignorance," they replied. "She knows nothing but that she is a virtue."

It is a wise "man's man" who knows what it is that he despises in a "ladies' man."

If the vices of women worshiped their creators men would boast of the adoration they inspire.

The only distinction that democracies reward is a high degree of conformity.

Slang is the speech of him who robs the literary garbage carts on their way to the dumps.

A woman died who had passed her life in affirming the superiority of her sex.

"At last," she said, "I shall have rest and honors."

"Enter," said Saint Peter; "thou shalt wash the faces of the dear little cherubim."

To woman a general truth has neither value nor interest unless she can make a particular application of it. And we say that women are not practical!

The ignorant know not the depth of their ignorance, but the learned know the shallowness of their learning.

He who relates his success in charming woman's heart may be assured of his failure to charm man's ear.

What poignant memories the shadows bring;
What songs of triumph in the dawning ring!
By night a coward and by day a king.

When among the graves of thy fellows, walk with circumspection; thine own is open at thy feet.

As the physiognomist takes his own face as the highest type and standard, so the critic's theories are imposed by his own limitations.

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy," and our neighbors take up the tale as we mature.

"My laws," she said, "are of myself a part:
I read them by examining my heart."
"True," he replied; "like those to Moses known,
Thine also are engraven upon stone."

Love is a distracted attention: from contemplation of one's self one turns to consider one's dream.

"Halt!—who goes there?"
"Death."
"Advance, Death, and give the countersign."
"How needless! I care not to enter thy camp to-night. Thou shalt enter mine."
"What! I a deserter?"
"Nay, a great soldier. Thou shalt overcome all the enemies of mankind."
"Who are they?"
"Life and the Fear of Death."

The palmist looks at the wrinkles made by closing the hand and says they signify character. The philosopher reads character by what the hand most loves to close upon.

Ah, woe is his, with length of living cursed,
Who, nearing second childhood, had no
first.
Behind, no glimmer, and before no ray—
A night at either end of his dark day.

A noble enthusiasm in praise of Woman is not incompatible with a spirited zeal in defamation of women.

The money-getter who pleads his love of work has a lame defense, for love of work at money-getting is a lower taste than love of money.

He who thinks that praise of mediocrity atones for disparagement of genius is like one who should plead robbery in excuse of theft.

The most disagreeable form of masculine hypocrisy is that which finds expression in pretended remorse for impossible gallantries.

Any one can say that which is new; any one that which is true. For that which is both new and true we must go duly accredited to the gods and await their pleasure.

The test of truth is Reason, not Faith; for to the court of Reason must be submitted even the claims of Faith.

"Whither goest thou?" said the angel.
"I know not."
"And whence hast thou come?"
"I know not."
"But who art thou?"
"I know not."
"Then thou art Man. See that thou turn not back, but pass on to the place whence thou hast come."

If Expediency and Righteousness are not father and son they are the most harmonious brothers that ever were seen.

Train the head, and the heart will take care of itself; a rascal is one who knows not how to think.

Do you to others as you would
That others do to you;
But see that you no service good
Would have from others that they could
Not rightly do.

Taunts are allowable in the case of an obstinate husband: balky horses may best be made to go by having their ears bitten.

Adam probably regarded Eve as the woman of his choice, and exacted a certain gratitude for the distinction of his preference.

A man is the sum of his ancestors; to reform him you must begin with a dead ape and work downward through a million graves. He is like the lower end of a suspended chain; you can sway him slightly to the right or the left, but remove your hand and he falls into line with the other links.

He who thinks with difficulty believes with alacrity. A fool is a natural proselyte, but he must be caught young, for his convictions, unlike those of the wise, harden with age.

These are the prerogatives of genius: To know without having learned; to draw just conclusions from unknown premises; to discern the soul of things.

Although one love a dozen times, yet will the latest love seem the first. He who says he has loved twice has not loved once.

Men who expect universal peace through invention of destructive weapons of war are no wiser than one who, noting the improvement of agricultural implements, should prophesy an end to the tilling of the soil.

To parents only, death brings an inconsolable sorrow. When the young die and the old live, nature's machinery is working with the friction that we name grief.

Empty wine-bottles have a bad opinion of women.

Civilization is the child of human ignorance and conceit. If Man knew his insignificance in the scheme of things he would not think it worth while to rise from barbarity to enlightenment. But it is only through enlightenment that he can know.

Along the road of life are many pleasure resorts, but think not that by tarrying in them you will take more days to the journey. The day of your arrival is already recorded.

The most offensive egotist is he that fears to say "I" and "me." "It will probably rain"—that is dogmatic. "I think it will rain"—that is natural and modest. Montaigne is the most delightful of essayists because so great is his humility that he does not think it important that we see not Montaigne. He so forgets himself that he employs no artifice to make us forget him.

On fair foundations Theocrats unwise
Rear superstructures that offend the skies.
"Behold," they cry, "this pile so fair and tall!
Come dwell within it and be happy all."

But they alone inhabit it, and find,
Poor fools, 'tis but a prison for the mind.

If thou wilt not laugh at a rich man's wit thou art an anarchist, and if thou take not his word thou shalt take nothing that he hath. Make haste, therefore, to be civil to thy betters, and so prosper, for prosperity is the foundation of the state.

Death is not the end; there remains the litigation over the estate.

When God makes a beautiful woman, the devil opens a new register.

When Eve first saw her reflection in a pool, she sought Adam and accused him of infidelity.

"Why dost thou weep?"

"For the death of my wife. Alas! I shall never again see her!"

"Thy wife will never again see thee, yet she does not weep."

What theology is to religion and jurisprudence to justice, etiquette is to civility.

"Who art thou that despite the piercing cold and thy robe's raggedness seemest to enjoy thyself?"

"Naught else is enjoyable—I am Contentment."

"Ha! thine must be a magic shirt. Off with it! I shiver in my fine attire."

"I have no shirt. Pass on, Success."

Ignorance when inevitable is excusable. It may be harmless, even beneficial; but it is charming only to the unwise. To affect a spurious ignorance is to disclose a genuine.

Because you will not take by theft what you can have by cheating, think not yours is the only conscience in the world. Even he who permits you to cheat his neighbor will shrink from permitting you to cheat himself.

"God keep thee, stranger; what is thy name?"

"Wisdom. And thine?"

"Knowledge. How does it happen that we meet?"

"This is an intersection of our paths."

"Will it ever be decreed that we travel always the same road?"

"We were well named if we knew."

Nothing is more logical than persecution. Religious tolerance is a kind of infidelity.

Convictions are variable; to be always consistent is to be sometimes dishonest.

The philosopher's profoundest conviction is that which he is most reluctant to express, lest he mislead.

When exchange of identities is possible, be careful; you may choose a person who is willing.

The most intolerant advocate is he who is trying to convince himself.

In the Parliament of Otumwee the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed a tax on fools.

"The right honorable and generous gentleman," said a member, "forgets that we already have it in the poll tax."

"Whose dead body is that?"

"Credulity's."

"By whom was he slain?"

"Credulity."

"Ah, suicide."

"No, surfeit. He dined at the table of Science, and swallowed all that was set before him."

Don't board with the devil if you wish to be fat.

Pray do not despise your delinquent debtor; his default is no proof of poverty.

Courage is the acceptance of the gambler's chance: a brave man bets against the game of the gods.

"Who art thou?"
"A philanthropist. And thou?"
"A pauper."
"Away! you have nothing to relieve my need."

Youth looks forward, for nothing is behind; Age backward, for nothing is before.

Think not, O man, the world has any need
That thou canst truly serve by word or deed.
Serve thou thy better self, nor care to know
How God makes righteousness and roses grow.

In spiritual matters material aids are not to be despised: by the use of an organ and a painted window an artistic emotion can be made to seem a religious ecstasy.

The poor man's price of admittance to the favor of the rich is his self-respect. It assures him a seat in the gallery.

One may know oneself ugly, but there is no mirror for the understanding.

If the righteous thought death what they think they think it they would search less diligently for divine ordinances against suicide.

Weep not for cruelty to rogues in jail:
Injustice can the just alone assail.
Deny compassion to the wretch who swerved,
Till all who, fainting, walked aright are served.

The artless woman may be known by her costume: her gown is trimmed with feathers of the white blackbird.

All are lunatics, but he who can analyze his delusion is called a philosopher.

Slang is a foul pool at which every dunce fills his bucket, and then sets up as a fountain.

The present is the frontier between the desert of the past and the garden of the future. It is redrawn every moment.

The virtue that is not automatic requires more attention than it is worth.

At sunset our shadows reach the stars, yet we are no greater at death than at the noon of life.

Experience is a revelation in the light of which we renounce the errors of youth for those of age.

From childhood to youth is eternity; from youth to manhood, a season. Age comes in a night and is incredible.

Avoid the disputatious. When you greet an acquaintance with "How are you?" and he replies: "On the contrary, how are *you?*" pass on.

If all thought were audible none would be deemed discreditable. We know, indeed, that bad thoughts are universal, but that is not the same thing as catching them at being so.

"All the souls in this place have been happy ever since you blundered into it," said Satan, ejecting Hope. "You make trouble wherever you go."

Our severest retorts are unanswerable because nobody is present to answer them.

The angels have good dreams and bad, and we are the dreams. When an angel wakes one of us dies.

The man of "honor" pays his bet
By saving on his lawful debt.

When he to Nature pays his dust
(Not for he would, but for he must)
Men say, "He settled that, 'tis true,
But, faith, it long was overdue."

Do not permit a woman to ask forgiveness, for that is only the first step. The second is justification of herself by accusation of you.

If we knew nothing was behind us we should discern our true relation to the universe.

Youth has the sun and the stars by which to determine his position on the sea of life; Age must sail by dead reckoning and knows not whither he is bound.

Happiness is lost by criticising it; sorrow by accepting it.

As Nature can not make us altogether wretched she resorts to the trick of contrast by making us sometimes almost happy.

When prosperous the fool trembles for the evil that is to come; in adversity the philosopher smiles for the good that he has had.

When God saw how faulty was man He tried again and made woman. As to why He then stopped there are two opinions. One of them is woman's.

She hated him because he discovered that her lark was a crow. He hated her because she unlocked the cage of his beast.

"Who art thou?"

"Friendship."

"I am Love; let us travel together."

"Yes—for a day's journey; then thou arrivest at thy grave."

"And thou?"

"I go as far as the grave of Advantage."

Look far enough ahead and always thou shalt see the domes and spires of the City of Contentment.

You would say of that old man: "He is bald and bent." No; in the presence of Death he uncovers and bows.

If you saw Love pictured as clad in furs you would smile. Yet every year has its winter.

You can not disprove the Great Pyramid by showing the impossibility of putting the stones in place.

Men were singing the praises of Justice.

"Not so loud," said an angel; "if you wake her she will put you all to death."

Age, with his eyes in the back of his head,

thinks it wisdom to see the bogs through which he has floundered.

Wisdom is known only by contrasting it with folly; by shadow only we perceive that all visible objects are not flat. Yet Philanthropos would abolish evil!

One whose falsehoods no longer deceive has forfeited the right to speak truth.

Wisdom is a special knowledge in excess of all that is known.

To live is to believe. The most credulous of mortals is he who is persuaded of his incredulity.

In him who has never wronged another, revenge is a virtue.

That you can not serve God and Mammon is a poor excuse for not serving God.

A fool's tongue is not so noisy but the wise can hear his ear commanding them to silence.

If the Valley of Peace could be reached only by the path of love, it would be sparsely inhabited.

To the eye of failure success is an accident with a presumption of crime.

Wearing his eyes in his heart, the optimist

falls over his own feet, and calls it Progress.

You can calculate your distance from Hell by the number of wayside roses. They are thickest at the hither end of the route.

The world was made a sphere in order that men should not push one another off, but the landowner smiles when he thinks of the sea.

Let not the night on thy resentment fall:
Strike when the wrong is fresh, or not at all.
The lion ceases if his first leap fail—
'Tis only dogs that nose a cooling trail.

Having given out all the virtues that He had made, God made another.

"Give us that also," said His children.

"Nay," He replied, "if I give you that you will slay one another till none is left. You shall have only its name, which is Justice."

"That is a good name," they said; "we will give it to a virtue of our own creation."

So they gave it to Revenge.

The sea-bird speeding from the realm of night
Dashes to death against the beacon-light.
Learn from its evil fate, ambitious soul,
The ministry of light is guide, not goal.

While you have a future do not live too much in contemplation of your past: unless you are content to walk backward the mirror is a poor guide.

"O dreadful Death, why veilest thou thy face?"

"To spare me thine impetuous embrace."

He who knows himself great accepts the truth in reverent silence, but he who only believes himself great has embraced a noisy faith.

Life is a little plot of light. We enter, clasp a hand or two, and go our several ways back into the darkness. The mystery is infinitely pathetic and picturesque.

Cheerfulness is the religion of the little. The low hills are a-smirk with flowers and greenery; the dominating peaks, austere and desolate, holding a prophecy of doom.

It is not to our credit that women like best the men who are not as other men, nor to theirs that they are not particular as to the nature of the difference.

In the journey of life when thy shadow falls to the westward stop until it falls to the eastward. Thou art then at thy destination.

Seek not for happiness—'tis known
To hope and memory alone;
At dawn—how bright the noon will be!
At eve—how fair it glowed, ah, me!

Brain was given to test the heart's credibility as a witness, yet the philosopher's lady is almost as fine as the clown's wench.

"Who art thou, so sorrowful?"

"Ingratitude. It saddens me to look upon the devastations of Benevolence."

"Then veil thine eyes, for I am Benevolence."

"Wretch! thou art my father and my mother."

Death is the only prosperity that we neither desire for ourselves nor resent in others.

To the small part of ignorance that we can arrange and classify we give the name Knowledge.

"I wish to enter," said the soul of the voluptuary. "I am told that all the beautiful women are here."

"Enter," said Satan, and the soul of the voluptuary passed in.

"They make the place what it is," added Satan, as the gates clanged.

Woman would be more charming if one could fall into her arms without falling into her hands.

Think not to atone for wealth by apology: you must make restitution to the accuser.

Study good women and ignore the rest,
For he best knows the sex who knows the best.

Before undergoing a surgical operation arrange your temporal affairs. You may live.

Intolerance is natural and logical, for in every dissenting opinion lies an assumption of superior wisdom.

"Who art thou?" said Saint Peter at the Gate.

"I am known as Memory."

"What presumption!—go back to Hell. And who, perspiring friend, art thou?"

"*My* name is Satan. I am looking for——"

"Take your penal apparatus and be off."

And Satan, laying hold of Memory, said: "Come along, you scoundrel! you make happiness wherever you are not."

Women of genius commonly have masculine faces, figures and manners. In trans-

planting brains to an alien soil God leaves a little of the original earth clinging to the roots.

The heels of Detection are sore from the toes of Remorse.

Twice we see Paradise. In youth we name it Life; in age, Youth.

There are but ten Commandments, true,
But that's no hardship, friend, to you;
The sins whereof no line is writ
You're not commanded to commit.

Fear of the darkness is more than an inherited superstition—it is at night, mostly, that the king thinks.

"Who art thou?" said Mercy.
"Revenge, the father of Justice."
"Thou wearest thy son's clothing."
"One must be clad."
"Farewell—I go to attend thy son."
"Thou wilt find him hiding in yonder jungle."

Self-denial is indulgence of a propensity to forego.

Men talk of selecting a wife; horses, of selecting an owner.

You are not permitted to kill a woman who has wronged you, but nothing forbids you to reflect that she is growing older every minute. You are avenged fourteen hundred and forty times a day.

A sweetheart is a bottle of wine; a wife is a wine-bottle.

He gets on best with women who best knows how to get on without them.

"Who am I?" asked an awakened soul.

"That is the only knowledge that is denied to you here," answered a smiling angel; "this is Heaven."

Woman's courage is ignorance of danger; man's is hope of escape.

When God had finished this terrestrial
frame
And all things else, with or without a name,
The Nothing that remained within His
hand
Said: "Make me into something fine and
grand,
Thine angels to amuse and entertain."
God heard and made it into human brain.

If you wish to slay your enemy make haste,

O make haste, for already Nature's knife is at his throat and yours.

To most persons a sense of obligation is insupportable; beware upon whom you inflict it.

Bear me, good oceans, to some isle
Where I may never fear
The snake alurk in woman's smile,
The tiger in her tear.
Yet bear not with me her, O deeps,
Who never smiles and never weeps.

Life and Death threw dice for a child.

"I win!" cried Life.

"True," said Death, "but you need a nimbler tongue to proclaim your luck. The stake is already dead of age."

How blind is he who, powerless to discern
The glories that about his pathway burn,
Walks unaware the avenues of Dream,
Nor sees the domes of Paradise agleam!
O Golden Age, to him more nobly planned
Thy light lies ever upon sea and land.
From sordid scenes he lifts his eyes at will,
And sees a Grecian god on every hill!

In childhood we expect, in youth demand, in manhood hope, and in age beseech.

A violet softly sighed,
A hollyhock shouted above.
In the heart of the violet, pride;
In the heart of the hollyhock, love.

If women knew themselves the fact that men do not know them would flatter them less and content them more.

The angel with a flaming sword slept at his post, and Eve slipped back into the Garden. "Thank Heaven! I am again in Paradise," said Adam.

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